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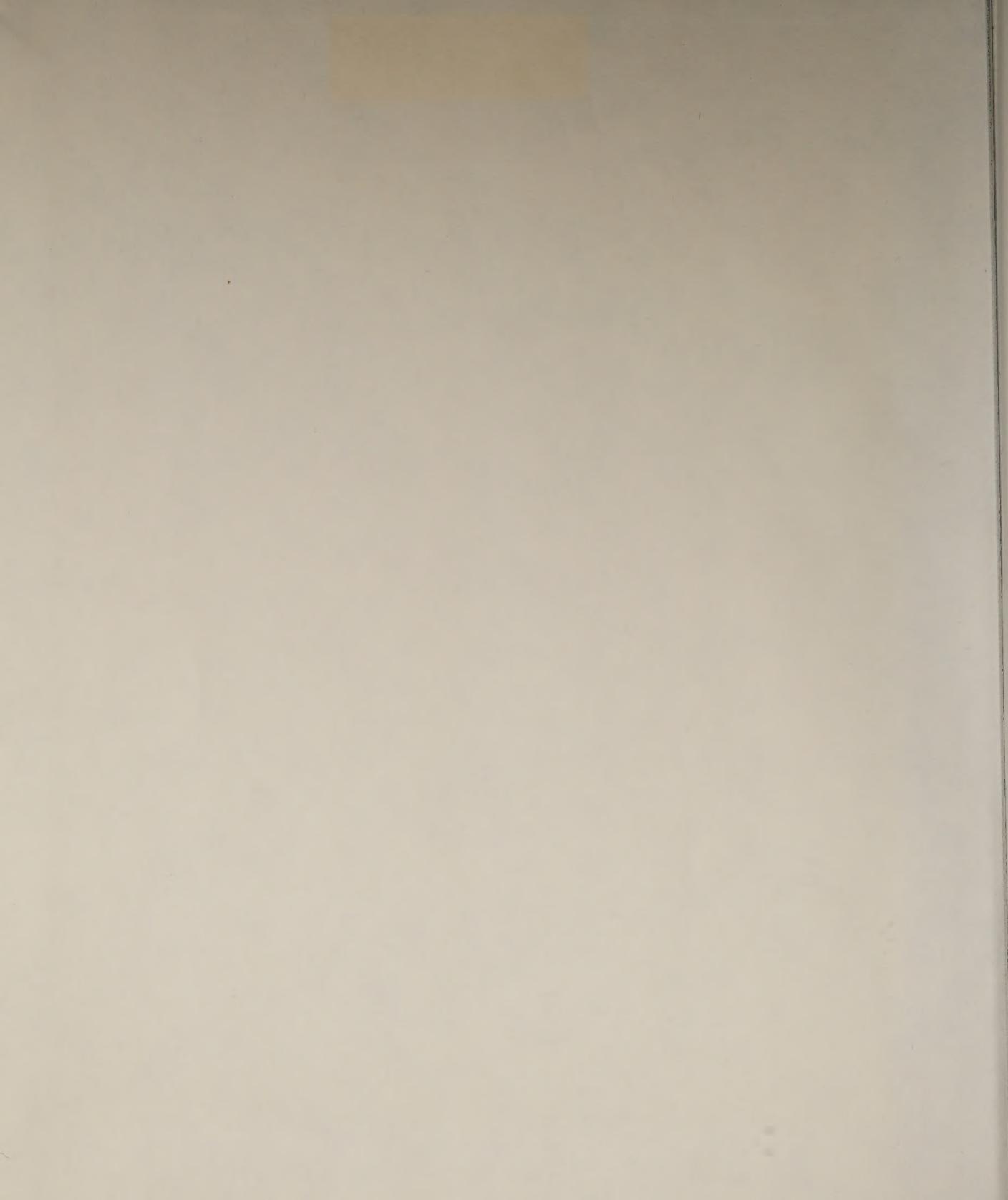
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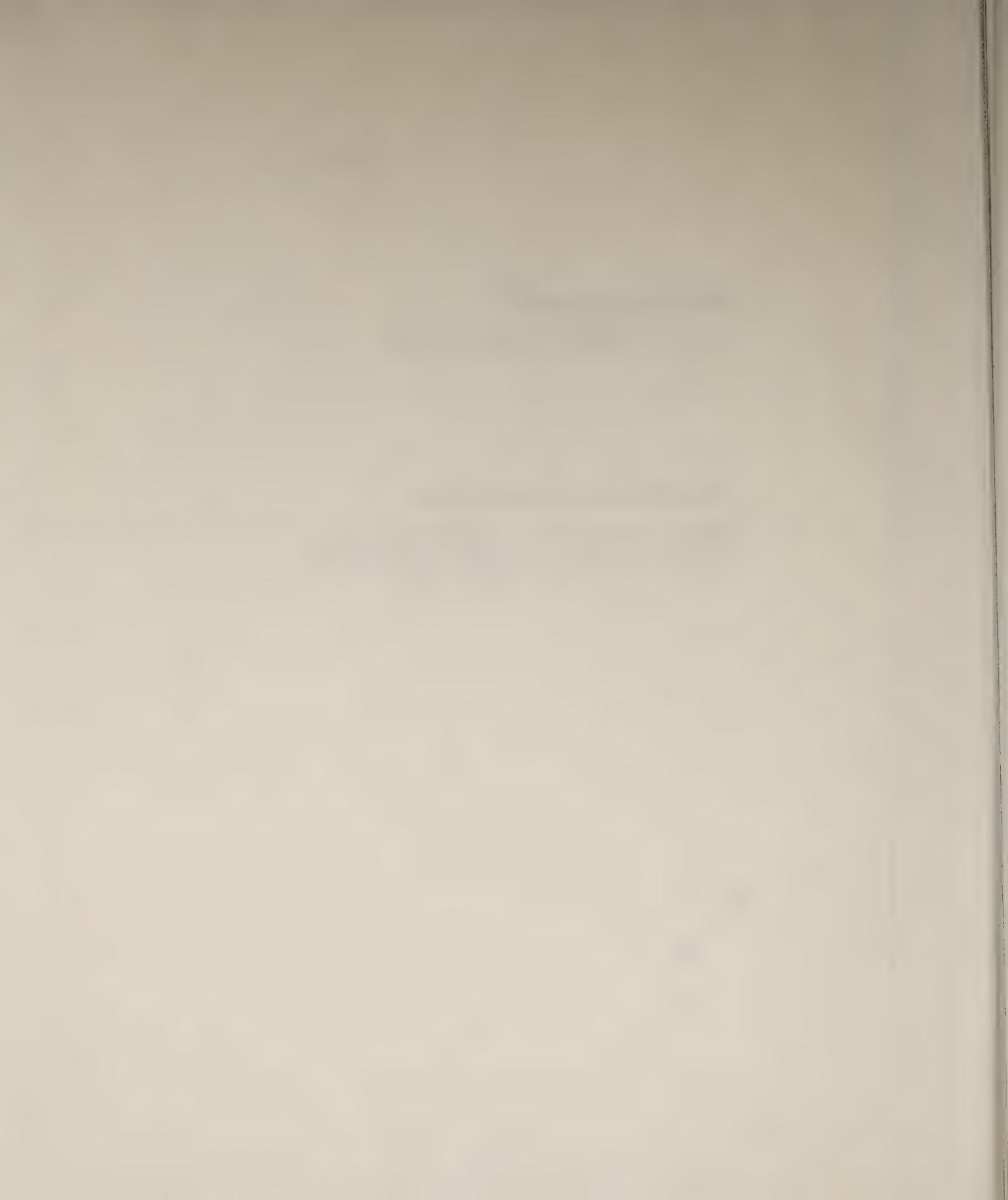
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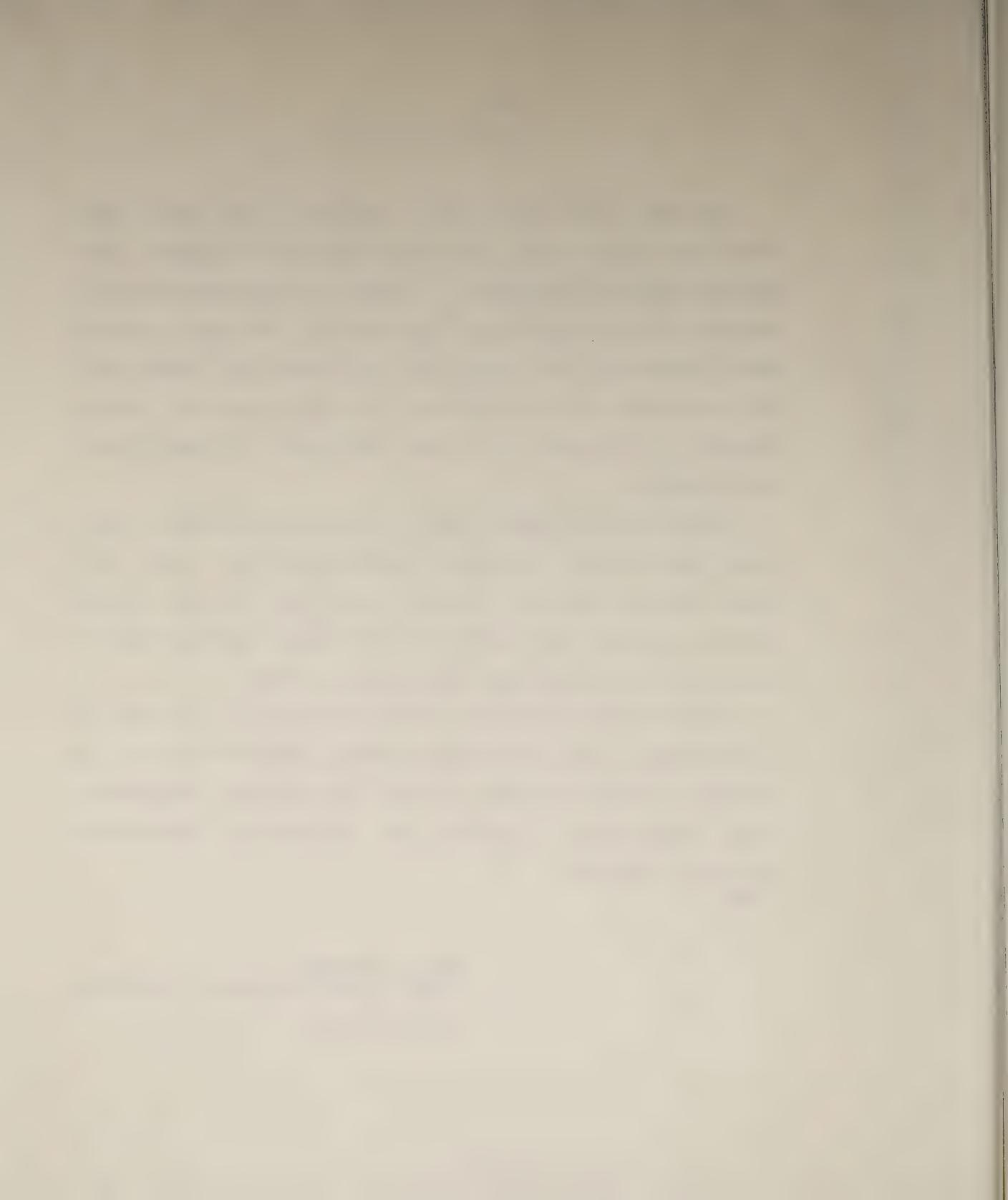
## F O R E W O R D

For some time I have felt a definite need for a book that would help to give our school children an insight into Monroe County's background. I consider a knowledge of one's county a true foundation of patriotism. The good citizen should understand the tasks that confronted his forebears--the reclamation of the land from the wilderness, the organization of government, and the development of agriculture and industry.

What were the Indians like? How did the pioneers live? What major events have taken place since the county was first settled, nearly a century ago? The student should feel an intimate familiarity with the wholly American Spirit that lies behind just such questions as those.

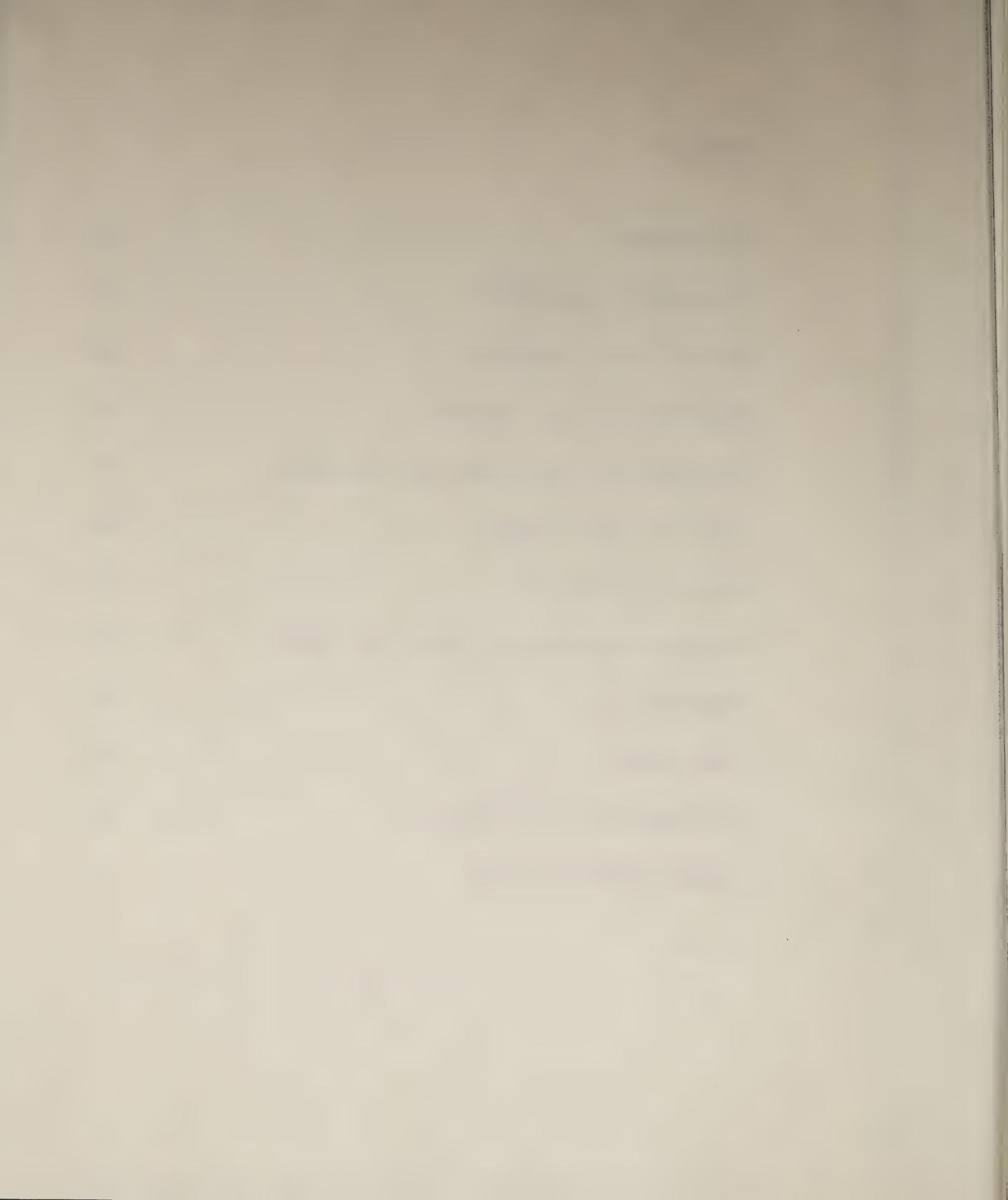
I take a genuine pride in presenting this new history of Monroe County, which has been carefully prepared for us by the Iowa Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration. Every effort has been made to have all information and dates correct.

Ether Roberts,  
County Superintendent of Schools,  
Monroe County



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## MONROE COUNTY HISTORY

### CHAPTER 1

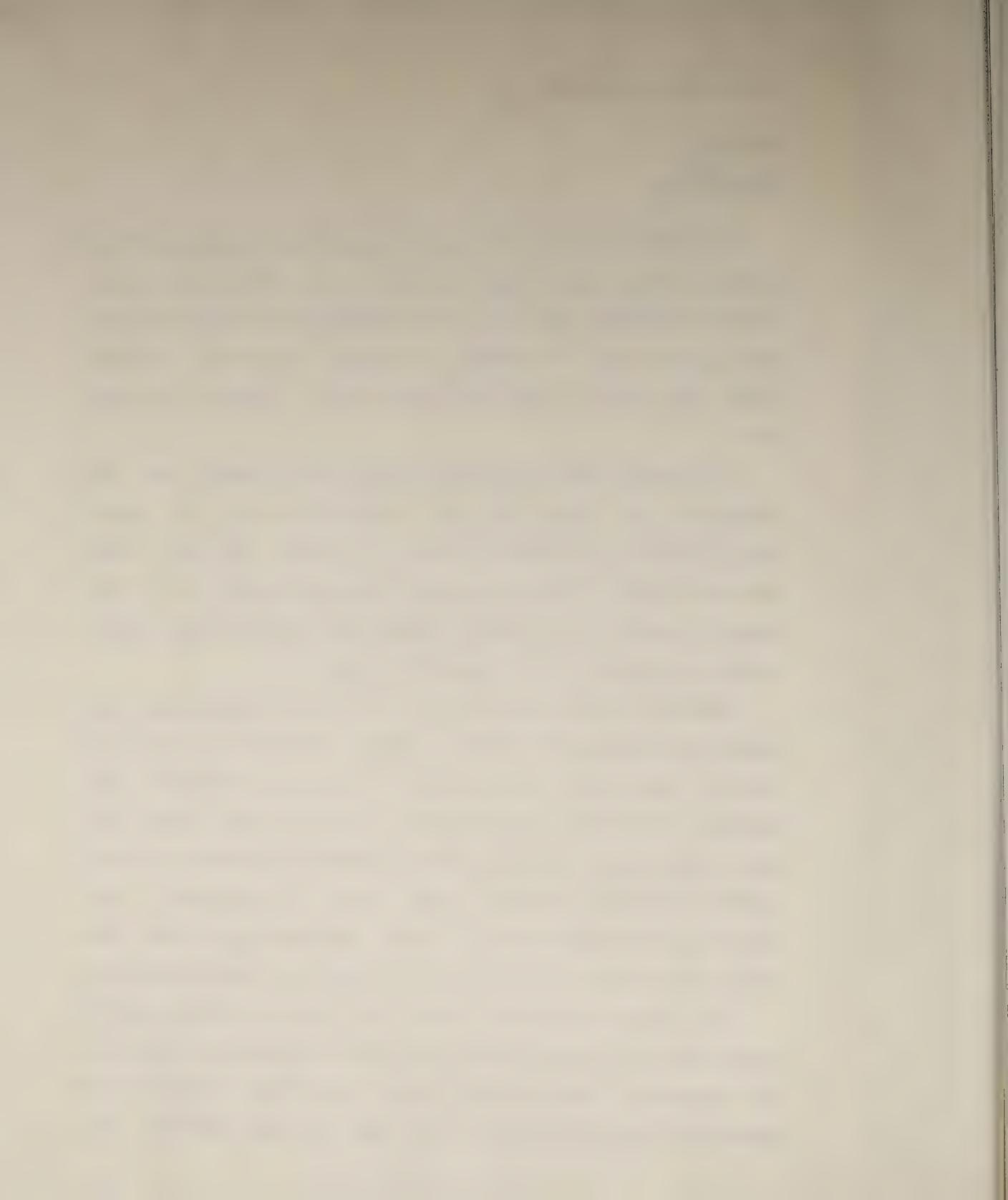
#### INTRODUCTION

The history of each of Iowa's ninety-nine counties forms a distinctive scene in the pageant of the State as a whole, a record valuable not only to the residents of the territory encompassed, but to students, historical societies and all others who wish to trace the pattern of a State in the making.

No visible barriers divide county from county; yet the boundaries are there, and each county seat with its courthouse becomes a miniature capital in itself. One may think metaphorically of Iowa as a huge log cabin quilt, with each county composing a "square", adding its essential and individual variation to the complete design.

Monroe County is a country of low hills and valleys and green woods, broken by small streams and dotted with farmhouses. Any of the country roads branching from the main highways will lead the traveler up and down hill, over culverts and bridges spanning lively creeks and brooks, through patches of woodland, past little white schoolhouses. Perhaps the road sweeps down a sharp decline; but at the top of the next slope, there may be an inspiring rural panorama.

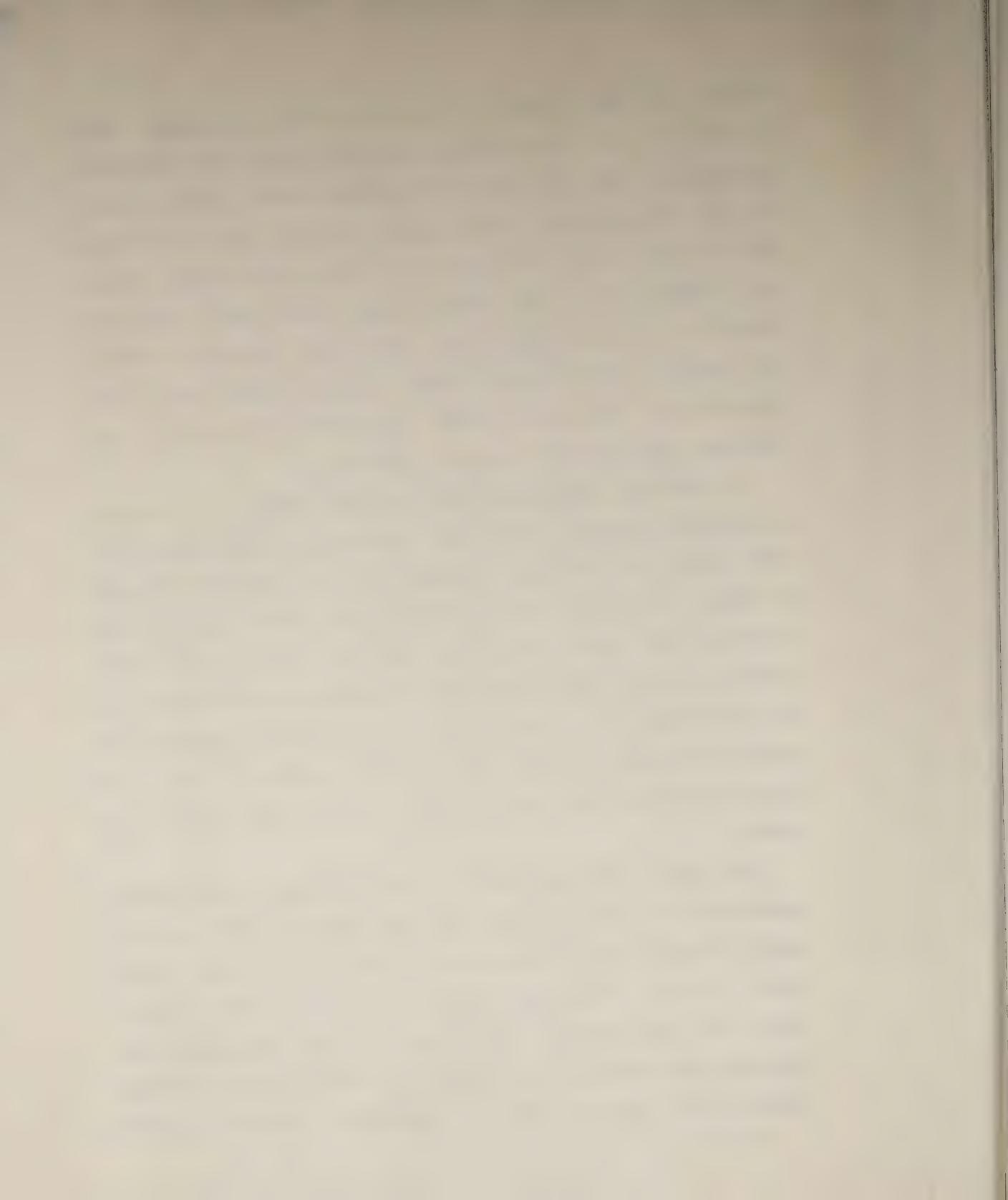
Once this countryside echoed with the cries and calls of birds and wild game: turkeys and prairie chickens roosted in the thickets. Deer bounded freely through the forests, but gradually diminished before the guns of the hunters. The



winter of "deep snow", -- 1843-1849 -- was especially hard on the deer, for their slender hooves caught in the thick, hard-packed white masses, and retarded their fleet passage so that pursuing dogs could leap over the crust and bring them to bay. They are extinct now, as are the foxes, wolves and bobcats; but wild geese, ducks and other transient waterfowl still alight on the ponds while passing through the region. Pheasants and quail still exist there, also muskrats and some mink, timber squirrels and rabbits. Most of these are protected by game preserves.

In the coal districts, the landscape assumes a strikingly different aspect, where the tipples of worked-out mines rear up and the mountainous slag-piles are red-blue and gray, or where the gaping holes of the slope mines yawn in the hillsides like dark forbidding caverns penetrated by mysterious tracks. The production of coal at one time surpassed agriculture as an industry in Monroe County; during the early 1900's an average of more than 2,000,000 tons was mined annually, the leading quantity of any district in the State.

The first white settlers in this county -- then called Kishkekosh -- arrived by way of Eddyville in 1843, and naturally stopped to establish their homes near the Des Moines River. Others following, ventured farther, along Miller, Avery and Cedar Creeks. From these streams they sought essential water supplies, and from the nearby stands of timber chopped their wood for fuel and building purposes. In the

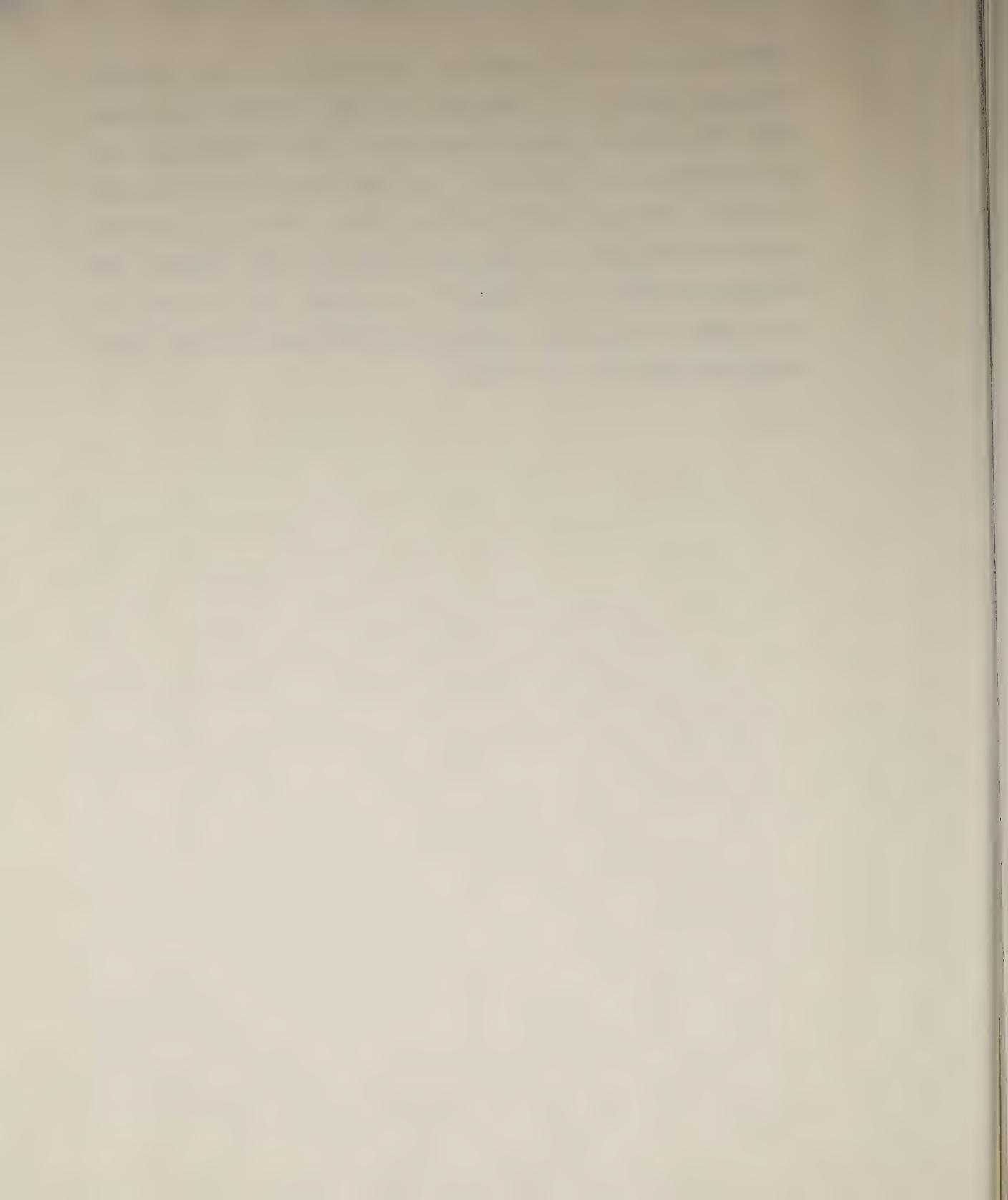


beginning, homesteaders from Pennsylvania broke the prairie with the cumbersome cast-iron plows they had hauled overland from the East; the Indians and Kentuckians wielded heavy hoes, sowing wheat -- before long a favorite crop -- by hand. Neighbors cooperated with one another, especially during the harvest season, moving from farm to farm with flails and "cradles", and later, mechanical harvesters. While the men labored in the fields, the women busied themselves in the kitchen; and when the hum of the reaper was stilled, all joined together around a table loaded with substantial and appetizing food. After the harvest, the neighbors gleaned clean golden straw to fill the bedding ticks which they had piled into their oxcarts. They likewise conducted their butchering in community style, and after the slaughter packed away spareribs and lashed luscious hams up in the smokehouse to be cured with the fragrance of burning hickory wood. When the apples hung ripe and heavy on the trees, the women gathered around big outdoor fires, where they set the fruit to boiling in huge copper kettles, and stirred it for hours at a time with wooden paddles until the finished apple butter was ready to be ladled into stone jars and put away in cellar storerooms.

The pioneer homesteads have since given place to modern farms and city dwellings with town lots. Paved and surfaced highways facilitate motor transportation not only from one end of the county, but from one end of the State to the other. The farmer drives his threshers, like as not, by



automobile for their meals at restaurants in the nearest village; possibly he procures his meat, like a city man, from the packing house or meat shops; and the housewife puts up preserves and vegetables in her roomy - well-equipped kitchen. The pattern of life in Monroe County is not very different from that of any other section in the State. Its history, however, is distinct, individual, and traces its own course through the decades since the territory was first reclaimed from the wild rness.

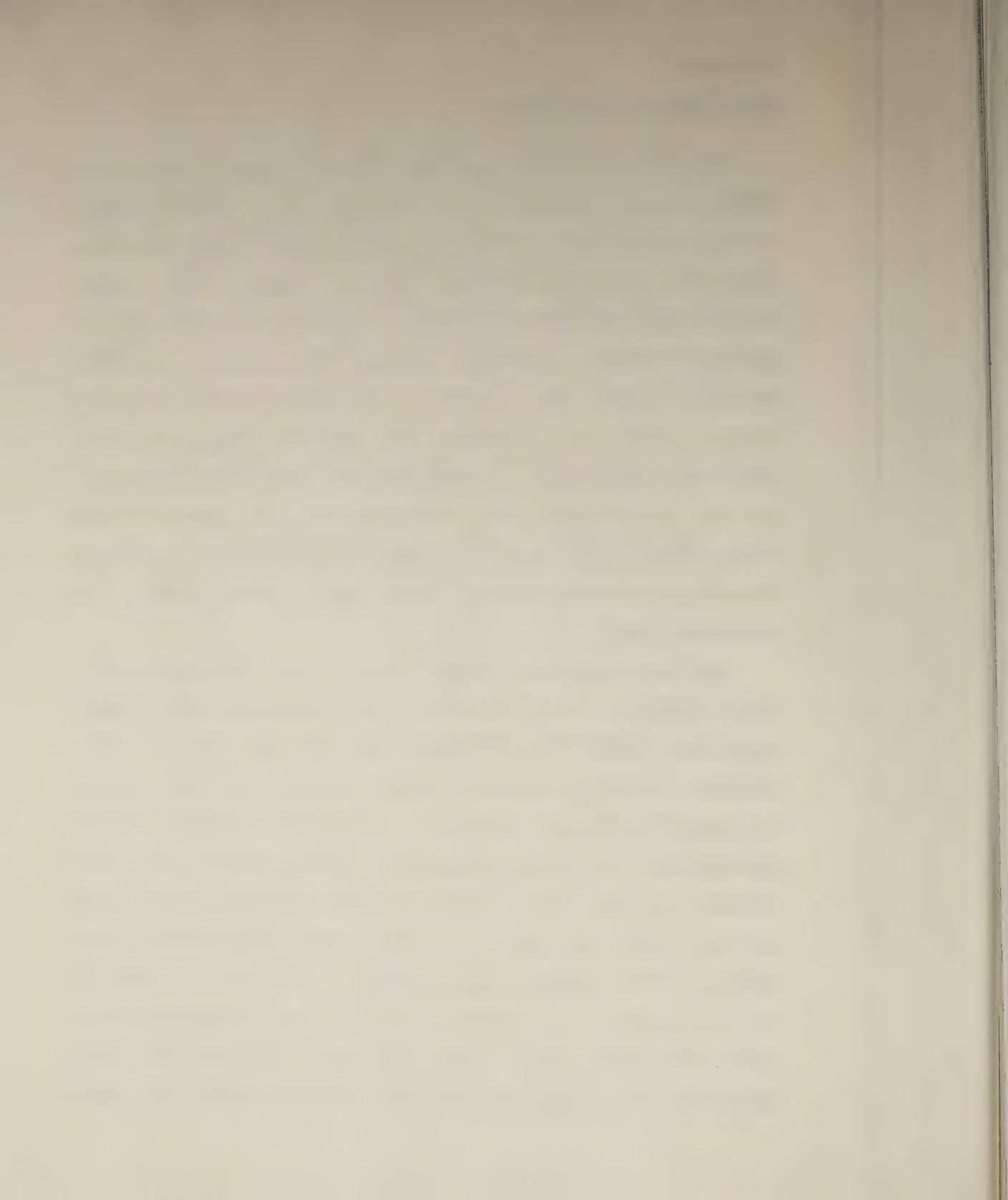


## CHAPTER 2

### THE NATURAL BACKGROUND

When the first white settlers ventured into the area now known as Monroe County, they probably gave little thought to conditions which had prevailed there during the previous centuries. Faced with the realities of pioneer life -- taking over the land from the Indians, hewing home sites out of the native timber, building cabins, hunting game for food, planting fields and gardens -- they had not much time for thinking about the history of the region. They would perhaps have been amazed to learn that the soils they cultivated were the products, not of hundreds, but of thousands and even millions of years of shifting sea and grinding glaciers. Once the prairie country was submerged at the bottom of a boundless ocean.

The hard, regularly bedded rocks of Iowa were originally soft sediments on the floor of a vast midwestern sea. Sand-banks were later to become sandstone, mud-beds were to form shales, and coral reefs and marine shells were to provide the basis for future limestones. Masses of vegetable matter accumulating in salt-water marshes hardened during the centuries into coal seams. Skeletons of creatures that lived in the waters while the indurated rocks were forming, according to the Sketch of Iowa Geology, published in 1926 by the Iowa Geological Survey, not only tell "of the presence of an ocean over certain parts of Iowa at the time the sediments in which they are imbedded were laid down, but they



reveal the character, condition, and stage of development of the marine life of the globe during the successive far away periods that collectively make up geologic history. The rocks in question, therefore, so far as relates to Iowa, are nothing more than the consolidated sands and muds of old sea bottoms preserving for our inspection samples of the life that occupied the seas at the time each successive bed was in process of accumulation. Iowa has passed more time under the ocean than as dry land."

The soils and subsoils which are so important to Iowa's prosperity are formed by a covering of unconsolidated materials ranging from a few inches to more than 500 feet in thickness, spread over the hard or indurated rocks.

Later what is now Iowa was covered by a succession of sheets of ice -- the Nebraskan, the Kansan, the Illinoian, and the Wisconsin glaciers. The latter had two lobes, one identified as the Iowan, and a second, called the Mankato, extending through the northern, central and eastern areas of the State. The Mankato retreated, it is estimated, only 25,000 years ago. As the hard, glittering white fields crawled across the land, they pushed and twisted hills, valleys and rivers into or out of position, and the melting snows carried away with them immense quantities of sands and gravels, which (with the boulders and the fine clay left in the wake of the glaciers) is known as "drift."

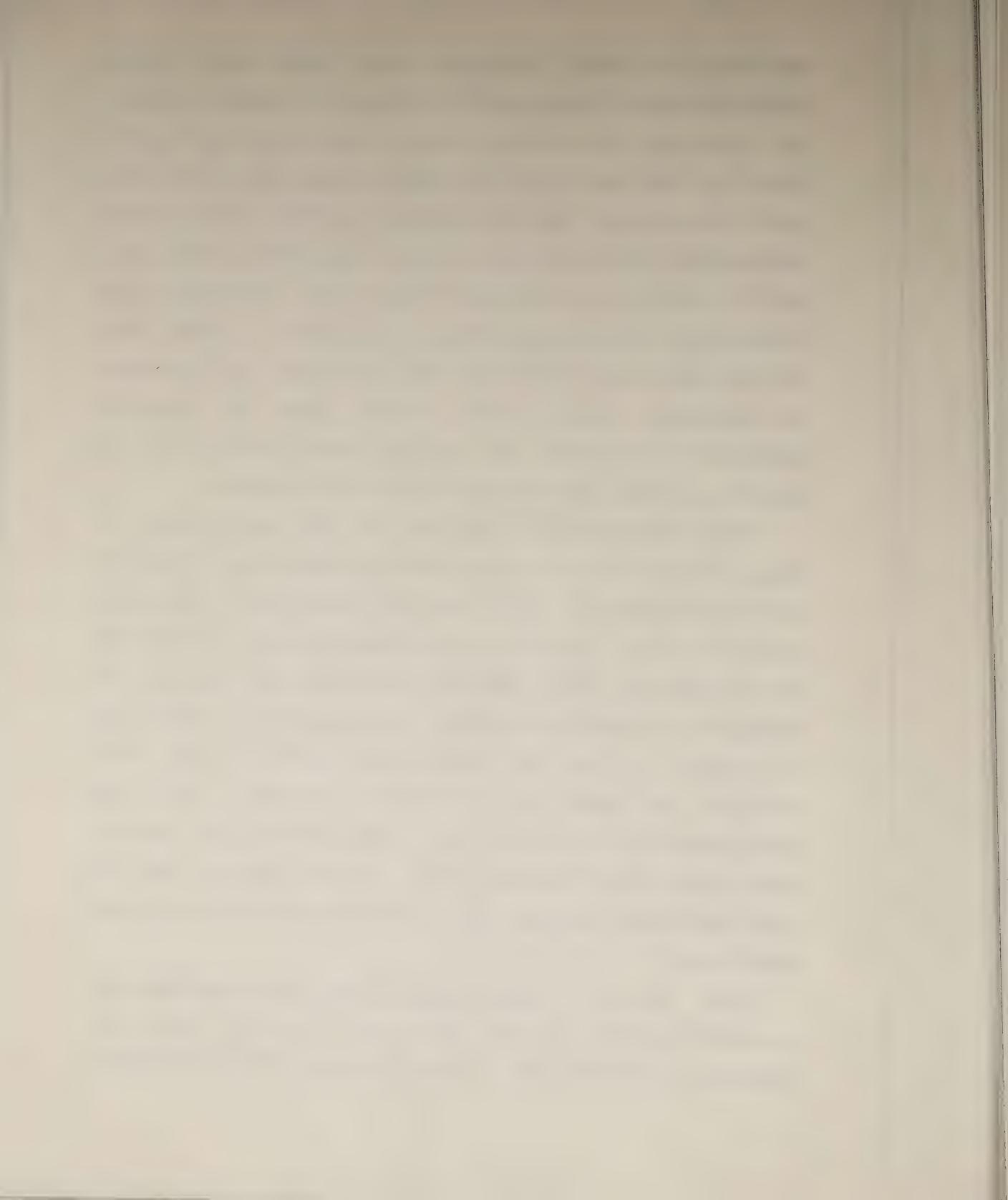
Drift and loess form the principal soils of Monroe County. Loess soils are fine dust-like deposits carried by



the winds of an early geological age. Drift soil covers an area of 104,640 acres or 37.8 percent of Monroe County; the loess more than 124,480 acres, or 44.9 percent. In addition to these are found 10.3 percent swamp and bottom-land soils, from poorly drained sections; terrace soils, former bottom-lands raised by some change in the course of the rivers, 1.9 percent; and residual soils, those stationary and formed from the underlying rock, 4.6 percent. A large area of the land in the county is waste, so far as planting crops is concerned, because of the erosion that has occurred throughout the years. The pasture area, amounting to 49 percent, is high, and consists mainly of bluegrass.

Monroe County lies in the heart of the coal fields of Iowa, but for years the rich potentialities of the district were not recognized. After the first urgency of homesteading had passed, pioneers put their energies into laying out and cultivating farms and raising stock, and were slow to recognize the wealth of mineral resources lying underneath the ground. At last the superficial strata of coal were stripped and mined, but not enough was done to show the heavy deposits of coal that lay in the valleys and basins. Deep mining later disclosed these deeper deposits and by 1901 more than a million tons a year was being mined in Monroe County.

The booklet, Some Aspects of the Iowa Coal Industry, published in 1939 by the Iowa State Planning Board, describes the formation of coal as follows. "During Carboni-

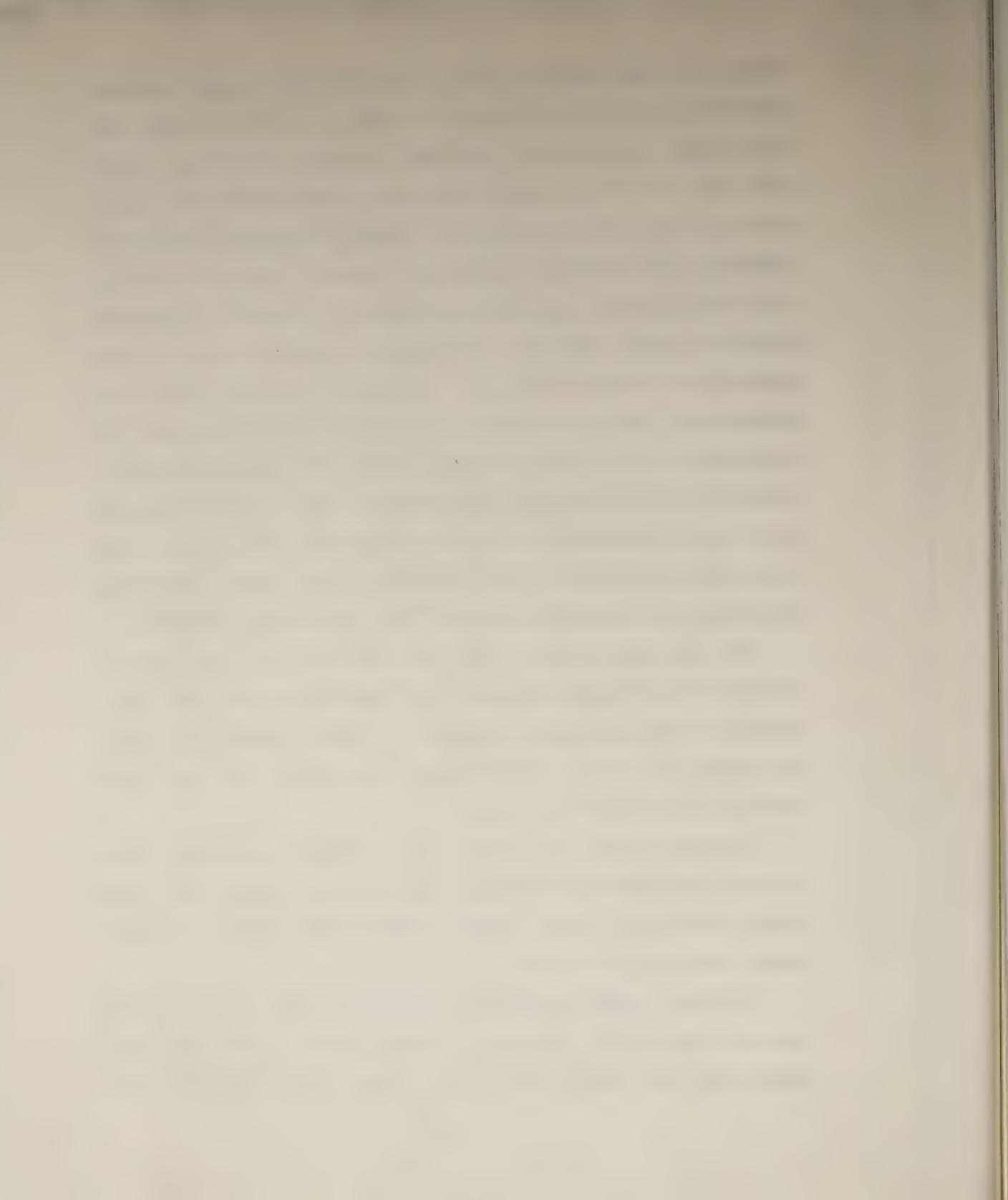


ferous time the United States was a broad, swampy lowland bordered on the south and east by high mountain ranges. In the swamps of the vast interior lowland, a lowland never more than a few feet above sea level, were forests of fast-growing pithy trees tangled in a dense undergrowth of ferns. Periodic, slow crustal movements caused alternate rising and sinking of the lowlands, and during periods of submergence the peaty vegetable accumulations of the swamps were numbered by marine shales and limestone and have thus been preserved. Such periods of submergence were followed by withdrawal of the sea and other periods of continental sedimentation and vegetable accumulation. This cycle, repeated many times, resulted in a great number of relatively thin coal seams alternating with thicker beds of shale, siltstone, sandstone, and limestone; hence, the term 'coal measures.'

"In the long interval that has elapsed since the Carboniferous, other sediments have been deposited over the 'coal measures' and the enormous weight of these overlying rocks has helped to convert these buried peats into the rock substance that we know as coal."

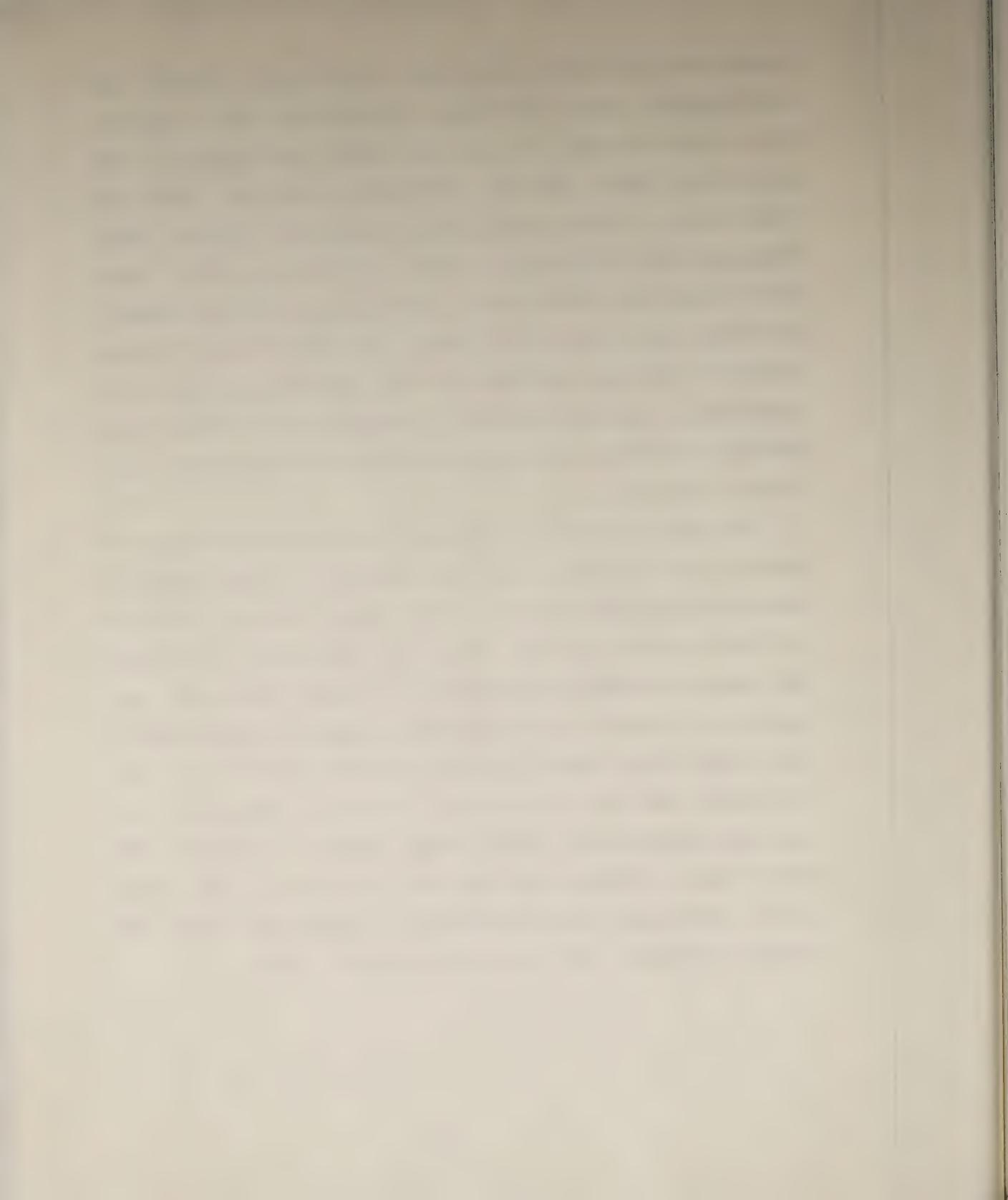
Topographically, a narrow high divide extending from Lovilia southeastward through and beyond Albia, cuts the county into two almost equal parts. Two narrow divides reach northward from Albia.

The most rugged land is to be found in the northwestern part of the county where the stream valleys are deep and narrow and the slopes are steep. Slopes in the rest of the



county are longer and more gentle. From a small portion of the southwest area, the water flows toward the Missouri River, but the other parts of the county are drained by the Des Moines River and its tributaries, chief of which is Cedar Creek. Miller Creek, Gray's, Avery and Little Avery Creeks are all tributaries of the Des Moines, while Cedar Creek also has tributaries: White's Creek, English Branch, Bee Branch and North Cedar Creek. The uplands are rolling tracts of prairie, separated by the numerous valleys and bordered by the somewhat broken surfaces of the valley sides. Numerous creeks and spring brooks traverse nearly every section of the land.

The story is told of a traveler to the former village of Albany, once located at the four corners of Monroe, Wapello, Davis and Appanoose counties. The early settler attempted to ford a stream with his horses and wagon, not realizing the deceptive depth of the waters. A keg of homemade soap lashed to the rear spilled into the creek, leaving a wake of milky suds which started the nickname "Soap Creek." It was afterwards said that this stream had unusual cleansing powers, and farmers drove their sheep into it to insure soft white wool. Actually, that one keg of soap is long since gone! There are, however, deposits of soapstone along the banks, to explain this so-called cleansing power.

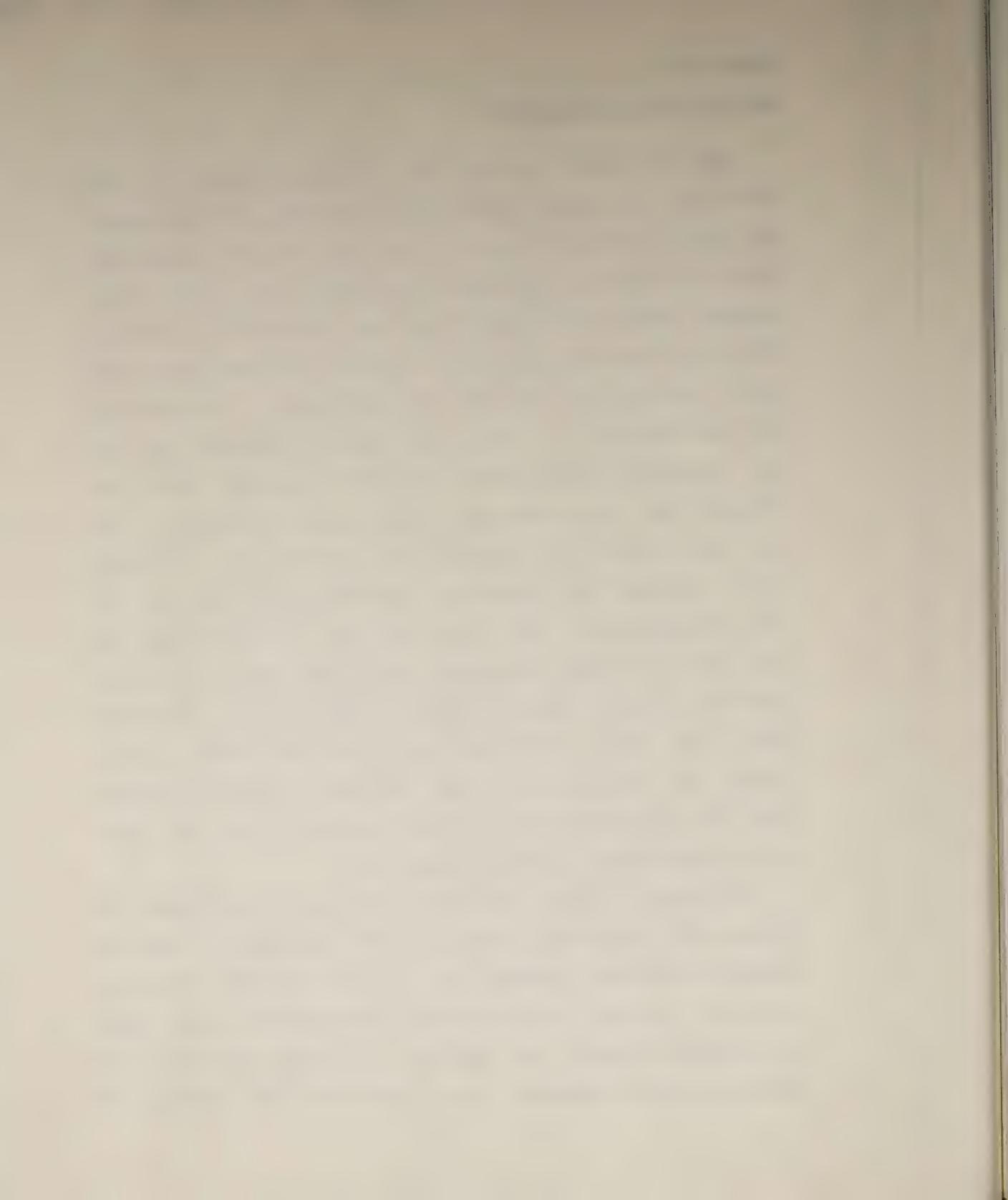


## CHAPTER 3

### END OF INDIAN OCCUPATION

When the first white men cast longing glances at the land which now forms Monroe County, the reign of the Indians was already coming to an end. For years they had roamed and fought and lived in the forests and along the banks of the silvery streams that wound in and out across the prairies. They would have been content to continue that existence forever, but the white settlers had other ideas. The territory had been explored at first by fur-traders, hunters, and then by prospective homesteaders who had emigrated from the crowded East to the new and unexploited countryside. The Sac chief, Black Hawk, watched the invaders with sorrowful eyes. He faced the future with foreboding and tried to resist the newcomers with force. He made his last stand in the Black Hawk War, and losing, had to sign away six million acres at a peace council held at Davenport, in September 1832. Ten years later, in 1842, the last of the Indian lands - ten million acres - was purchased with the agreement that the eastern section was to be vacated by May 1 of 1843 and the remainder by October 11, 1845.

The Sacs (or Sauks) and Foxes were associated tribes of Indians who dwelled in Michigan and Wisconsin, as well as Illinois and even farther east. Here is an early description of a typical village, which, incidentally, shows that the pioneer's sword was mightier than the pen -- if one valued accurate spelling. It is taken from the journal of

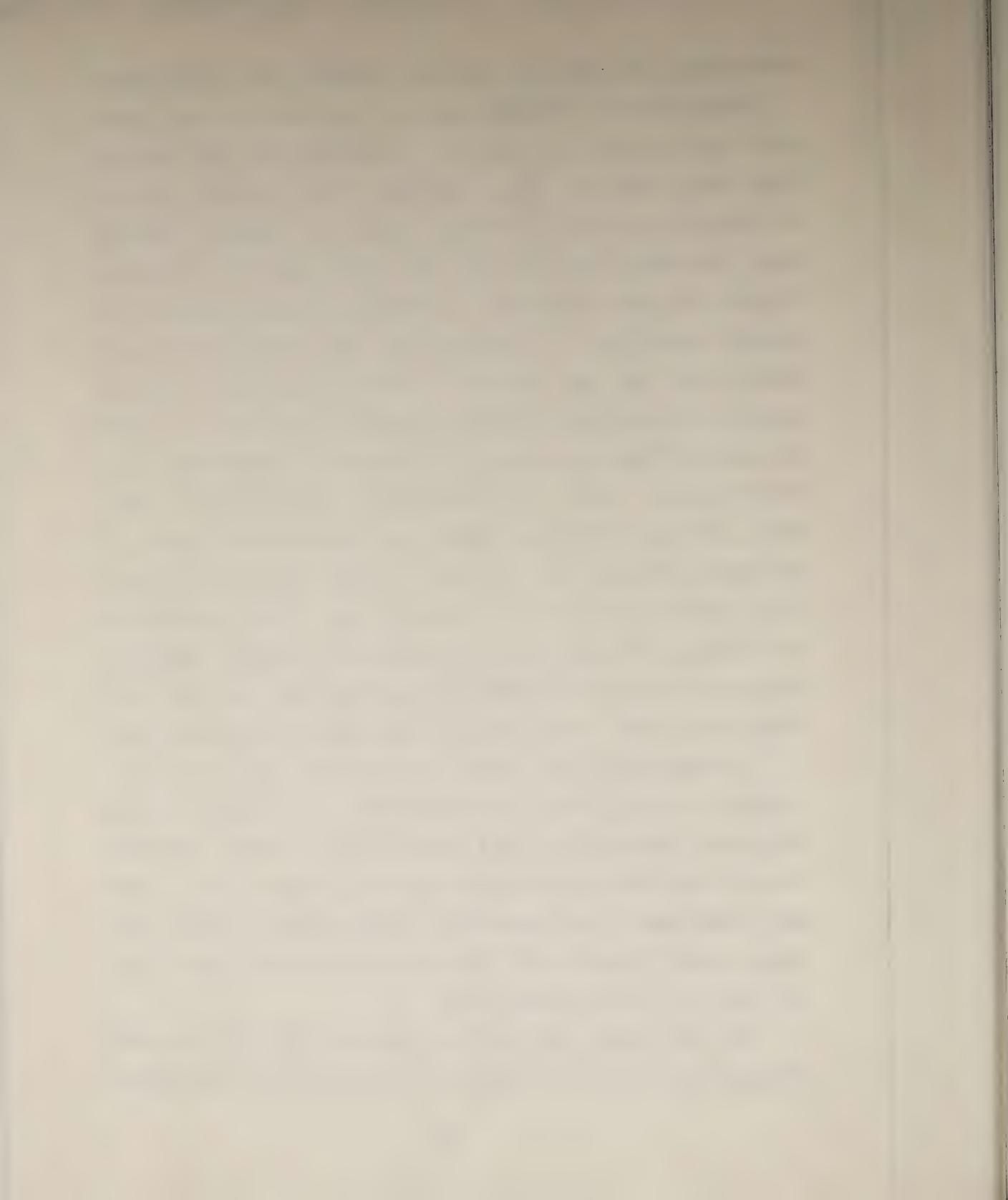


Peter Pond, who made his notes in Wisconsin from 1773-1775:

"These people are Caid Saukeas. They are of Good Size and Well Disposed--Les Inclined to tricks and Bad manners than Thare Nighbers. Thay will take of the traders Goods, on Creadit in the fall for thare youse. In Winter and Except for Axedant thay Pay the Deapt Verey Well for Indians. I mite have saide Inlitened or Sivelised Indians which are in General made worse by the Operation...Sum of thare Huts are Sixety feet long and Contanes Several fammalayes...In the fall of ye Year thay Leave thare Huts and Go into the Woods in Quest of Game and Return in the Spring to thare Huts before Planting time. The Women Rase Grate Crops of Corn, Been, Punkens, Potatoes, Millans and artikels--the Land is Exaleant--and Clear of Wood Sum Distans from the Villeag. Thare (are) Sum Hundred of Inhabitants. Thare amusements are Singing, Dancing, Snocking, Matcheis, Gaming, Feasting, Drinking, Playing the Slite of Hand, Hunting and thay are famas in Mageack. Thay are Not Verey Gellas of thare Women."

W. Grant Clark, son of one of the first white settlers, Wareham G. Clark, tells us he remembers his father's saying that the homesteaders were more afraid of other settlers than of the Indians, who had a habit of coming to the door and pleading, "Poor Indian--poor Indian--food, food." The Sacs, called "Socks", were straight, handsomely proportioned, and of a light copper color.

When the county was first created, in 1843, it was named Kishkekosh in honor of a liberal and enlightened Fox chief-



tain who had there his favorite hunting grounds, although his village home was farther north, on the banks of the South Skunk River. About 250 braves and squaws and their families lived together under his leadership, dwelling in wickiups, teepees made of light poles and covered with rushes and the stripped barks of trees. Elms, plums, crab-apples and wild hazelbush shaded the village. There the squaws cooked the meals, roasted dogs whole over outdoor fires, and tended their patches of corn. The men hunted and fished, and trained their ponies along the riverbanks. Kish-ke-kosh (the name was usually hyphenated) loved his wife and for her sake tried to dignify the status of all Indian women. Unlike most aborigines, he felt that the squaws should not be condemned to do all the hard work in camp and village, while their men were free to roam and enjoy the more exciting aspects of native life.

Kish-ke-kosh was by all accounts a most unusual person. He was not only brave, but witty, and an orator surpassed by few. His name has been given two widely different interpretations. One source states that it means "a savage biter", the other, "man with one leg off." The latter is explained by the Indian mother's custom of christening her child for the first person or object noticed after its birth. Evidently the future chief's mother saw a one-legged man hopping by. Kish-ke-kosh himself had a sturdy and well-shaped pair of legs which he retained to the last, and which were always a source of pride to him.



In 1837 Kish-ke-kosh ranked as a warrior chief -- a rank inferior to that of village chief -- under the celebrated Keokuk. He had a good and handsome face and because of his proud bearing and intellectual powers was chosen along with Keokuk, Black Hawk, Poweshiek and 15 other chiefs, to attend an important council in Washington, D. C. Gen. Joseph M. Street, Indian agent for the tribes at Agency City near Ottumwa, escorted the delegation, which traveled by way of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers to Wheeling, West Virginia and then in stagecoaches to the nation's capital.

An amusing incident which happened aboard the steamboat indicates Kish-ke-kosh's quick wit and presence of mind. A party of ladies had come aboard, and were at once eager to inspect the Indians at close range. Hoping to impress these feminine passengers, a young man traveling with the tribal delegates started to show off the natives, much as one might point out the merits of prize animals at a stock fair. He set himself to exhibit the colors of blankets and headdresses, and the many necklaces and bracelets of beads hung about the throats and arms of the unprotesting Redmen. Kish-ke-kosh watched impassively, and then as the young women began to laugh, and the young man went so far as to finger the fringes and garments of the chiefs, accompanied by a stream of patronizing comment, the Fox warrior grew angry. He did not reveal his feelings, however; he was too diplomatic for that. Kish-ke-kosh's reaction is well told in Manoah Hedge's Past and Present of Mahaska County. Instead of



showing his anger he merely stepped up to the offensive youth "and began vigorously to examine his clothing, feeling his hair, his watch chain, and exhibiting his teeth to the much-amused company of observers, chattering all the while in his native tongue. Before he had finished his pretended inspection he had taught the young man a lesson in considerate behavior not to be forgotten while his memory would serve him."

While in Washington, the Indians attended a council with the Sioux, held at the House of Representatives at the request of government officials. It was hoped there to straighten out the difficulties between the tribes, for the Sioux were often at war with the Sacs and Foxes. Kish-ke-kosh had no fear of the Sioux, nor was he over-considerate of their feelings. He garbed himself with especial care in a buffalo hide he had taken from a Sioux chief in a recent battle, and seated himself in a large window where a strong light revealed in full detail his headdress made of buffalo horns and mane, embellished with a long tail that trailed to the floor. At once the indignation of the Sioux was aroused, but their objections were not sustained by the presiding officers of the council. A Sioux chief opened the discussion, setting forth the complaint that the Sacs and Foxes had overrun their lands, driven them from their homes, killed their braves, and burned their villages. After Keokuk had brilliantly answered the charges, Kish-ke-kosh was asked to speak. Again he displayed his wit, and, instead of de-



fending his co-warriors, mimicked the complaints of the Sioux in such compelling and ironic language that the company in council was impelled to laugh with him. In recognition of his powers of eloquence, and general conduct on this trip, Kish-ke-kosh was made a village chief.

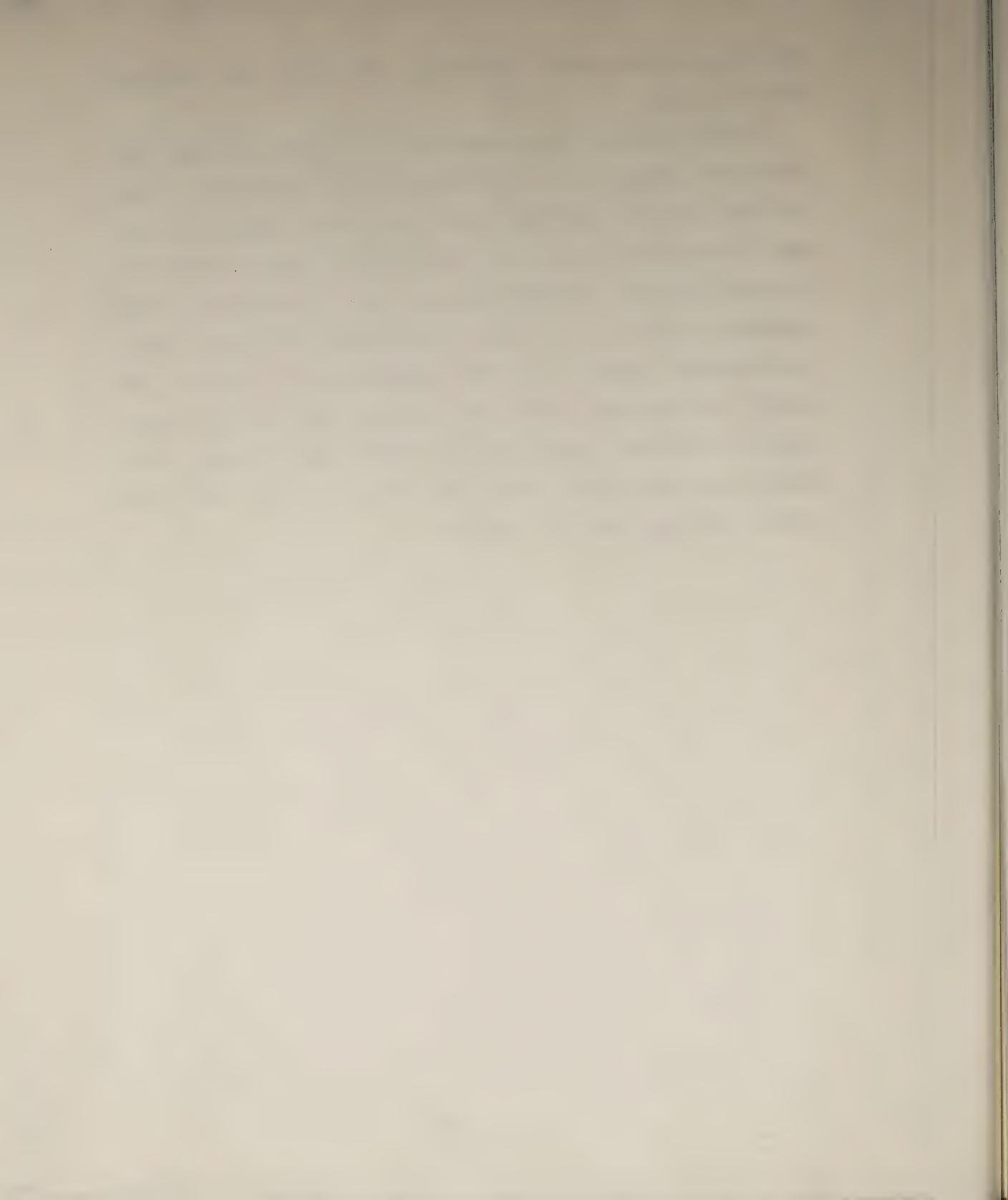
Before returning to Iowa, the Indians were taken to New York and Boston. Kish-ke-kosh readily made friends, especially with the ladies, and received many presents -- clothing, rings and other jewelry. He kept these tokens for the rest of his life, and always enjoyed showing them to admiring visitors, explaining that they had been "give me by white squaws."

However, the day of the Indian in Iowa had passed. In 1842 the chiefs sat at the council table, this time in Agency City. Iowa's most outstanding White Man -- Territorial Gov. John Chambers -- was present, arrayed in the brilliant uniform of a brigadier general of the United States Army. With his staff, he sat on a raised platform at one end of the council tent. At the other, grouped around Keokuk, squatted the Indians, garbed in their brightest blankets, daubed with paint and bedecked with feathers, beads and rings. From this meeting resulted the so-called "New Purchase", an acquisition by the whites of about ten million acres, for which the retiring Redmen received \$300,000 with interest at five percent per annum. By this agreement, the Indians bound themselves to leave the eastern part of the lands in question -- their last in Iowa -- by May 1, 1843,



and to vacate the whole territory and cross the Missouri River by 1845.

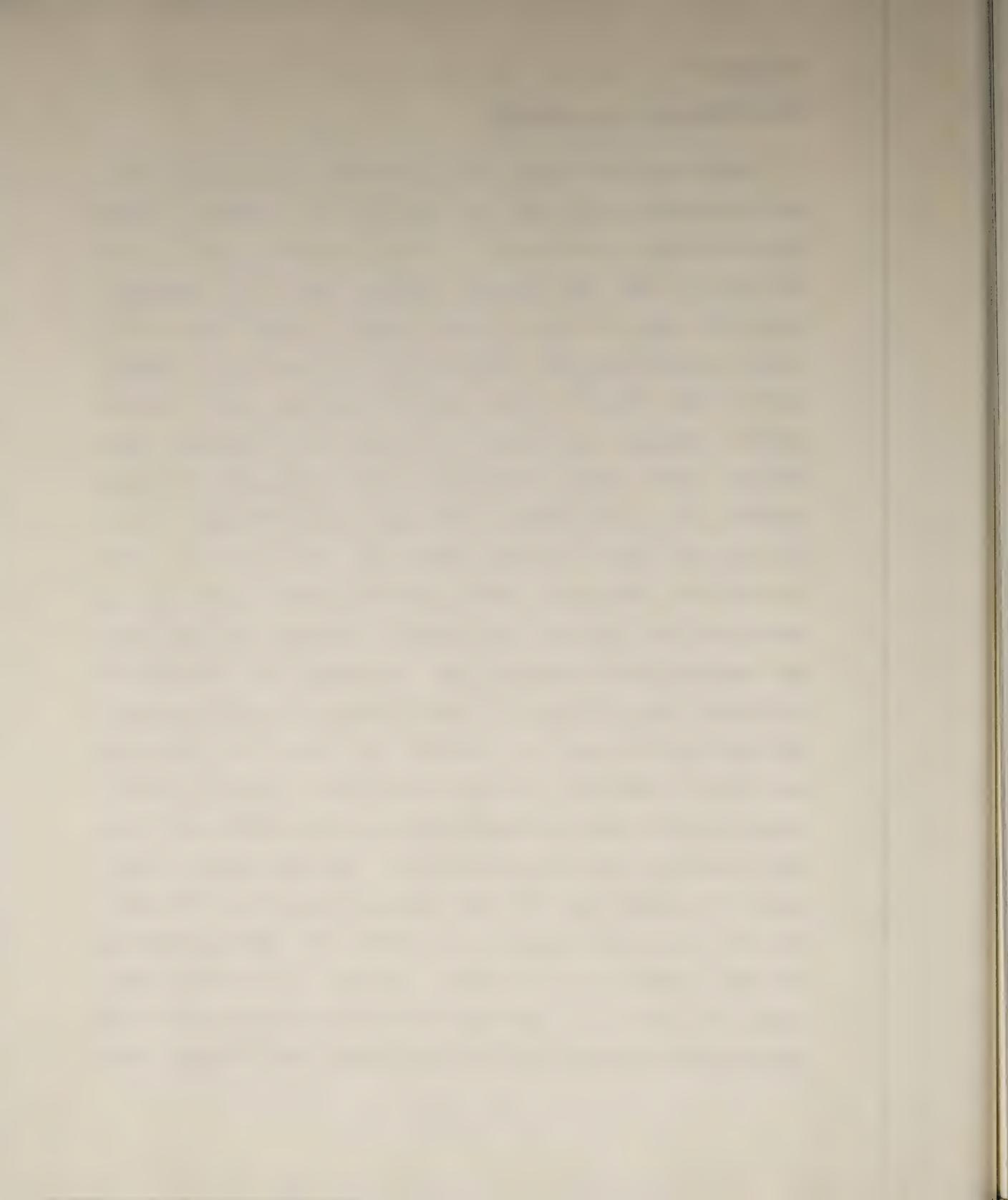
Kish-ke-kosh may have lamented the final decision, but he did not linger. A few months after the purchase treaty had been made, he and his people moved their village to Keokuk's headquarters near Fort Des Moines, a village site later known as Avon. Behind them they left their bark-covered wickiups; some of these were still standing when the oncoming white men moved into the neighborhood. Close to the border line between Monroe and Wapello counties is a stone where the Indians stopped to hold their final tribal ceremonies, and the spring where they drank for the last time before starting down into Kansas.



## CHAPTER 4

THE WHITE MAN'S NEW DOMAIN

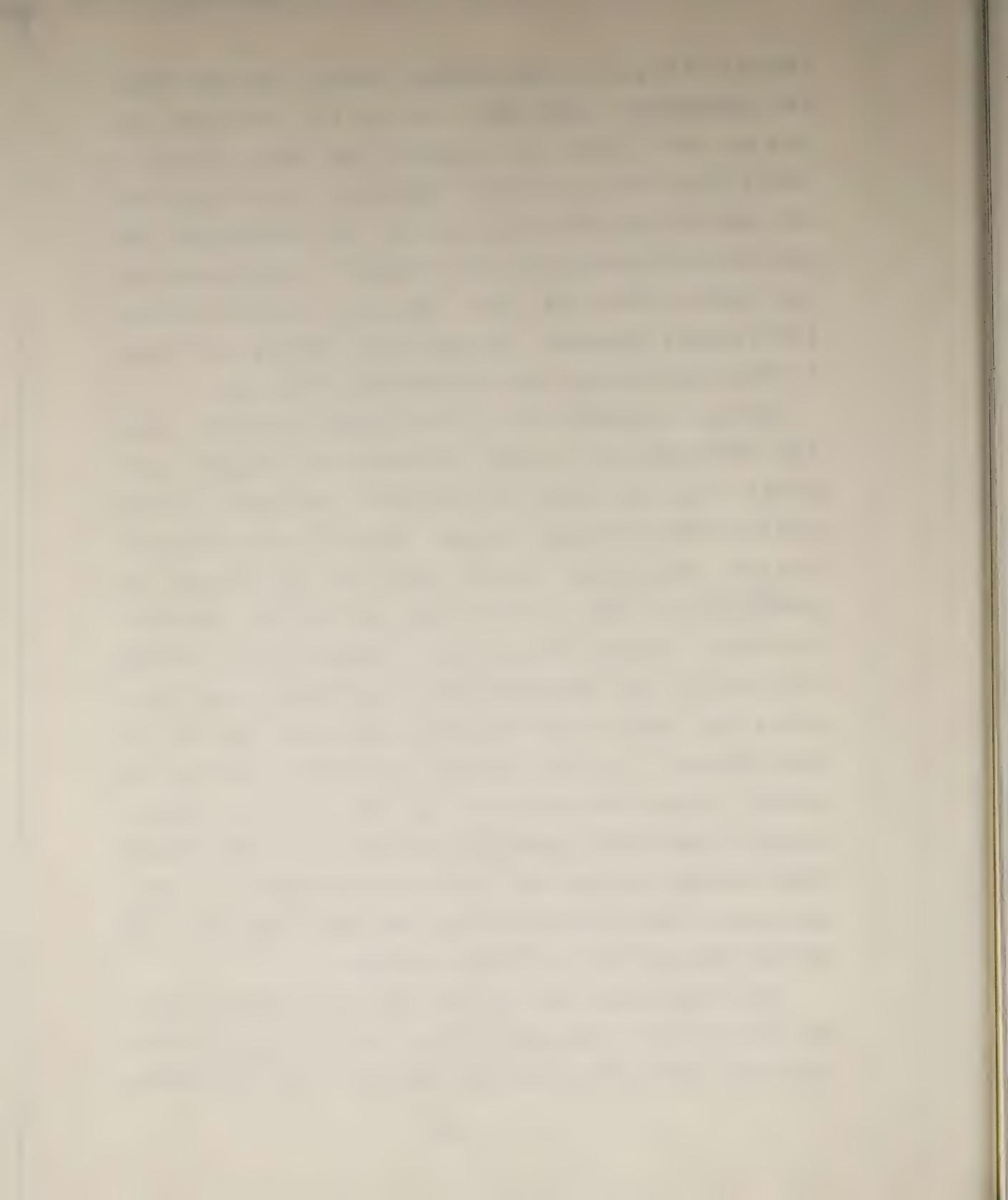
Soon after the Indians had made their last sale in 1842, an enterprising white man appeared in the territory which was to become Monroe County. A real easterner, John B. Gray had come to Iowa from Vermont in 1834, when by an agreement made with the purchase of a lot, he had claimed the privilege of naming the city of Burlington in honor of his former home in the Granite State. Why he wanted to move farther west is unknown, but perhaps he sought more solitude, perhaps he felt like Daniel Boone, who complained of being crowded when a new settler took up a claim 100 miles away. At any rate, Gray drove to Texas in 1837, but was later prompted to return to Iowa, where in 1842 he obtained an agency to sell goods to the Indians. Trading with the Red-men enabled him to prospect the territory that was soon to be opened, and, selecting a choice parcel of land, he blazed his mark on the trees to identify it. Until the following May it was unlawful to occupy the land or build a cabin. Gray therefore made his headquarters at Hard Fish's Sac and Fox village on the Des Moines River. Already another white man, J. P. Eddy, had won the Indians' consent to the erection of a large log cabin -- the better for trading purposes, he said. About 70 or 80 native wickiups composed the village, but there was a much larger roving population, for on Eddy's books were the names of more than 2,000 Indians who



called at his post to buy blankets, saddles, and other frontier necessities. With Gray had come two companions, his wife and her sister, Mrs. McAlvain, who took shelter in Eddy's cabin for the winter of 1842-1843. It is a pity that Mrs. Gray did not leave any record of her experiences, for her observations must have been valuable. At Burlington she had become acquainted with Black Hawk, Wapello, Keokuk, Kish-ke-kosh, Pashapaho and many other chiefs; had learned to talk their language and to understand their ways.

During the months prior to the opening of the new lands for settlement, May 1, 1843, United States Dragoons were posted along the eastern and southern borders to prevent squatters from slipping across. Naturally the prospective settlers did not want to wait until the last minute, and perhaps in the rush of the crowd, lose the best choice of locations. At last a few men were allowed to pass through the lines, if they traveled on foot, and did not carry axes. Horses and wagons were absolutely forbidden. But as so often happens, a way was found to circumvent a part of the ruling. Prospectors concealed axe heads under their clothing or in bundles of provisions, and once inside the desired land, brought out their axe handles or improvised new ones, and blazed their claims on trees. Then they made camp and settled down to wait for the promised day.

John Gray watched his opportunities, and managed to cut the logs for his cabin and have them ready to set up as soon as it was lawful to do so. The first of May was on a Sunday,



but observance of the Sabbath did not deter Gray from his desired objective. By sundown his cabin was erect, and soon Mrs. Gray would be able to move to a home of her own.

Probably this dwelling was the typical hastily-constructed cabin of the frontier, sometimes called "cat-faced"; because they were built with just one entrance, like the Indian wickiups. Rounded logs, plastered with clay and roofed with bark and sod, were erected around a large stone fireplace. Puncheons -- logs split in half and laid flat-side up -- formed the floor and some of the furniture. Wooden hinges held the door together, and if there were windows these were covered with greased paper instead of glass. Many touches added by feminine hands no doubt transformed such interiors into snug and even attractive abodes.

On May 6, 1843, Mrs. Gray left her winter quarters on the banks of the Des Moines River and was driven to her new domain. A survey made later, in the winter of 1844, by a Mr. McBeth, established Gray's Creek, and showed that the claim was located at Section 3, Township 73 N., Range 16 W. It was in the northeast corner of the county, only a few miles west of the old Hard Fish village, which had been laid out into a town, and named for its trader-founder, Eddyville.

Gray was all ready to start farming. He had previously hauled supplies and some stock -- pigs and chickens -- from Burlington. The Indians helped to ferry him across the Des Moines River, fastening canoes together into a raft strong enough to hold sections of his wagon. Gray urged his oxen



to swim across. Once established, he planted his corn as soon as the weather was seasonable, and was rewarded with a good harvest. He had added reason for happiness that fall, for on September 20, 1843, his son John S. Gray, the first white child in the county, was born.

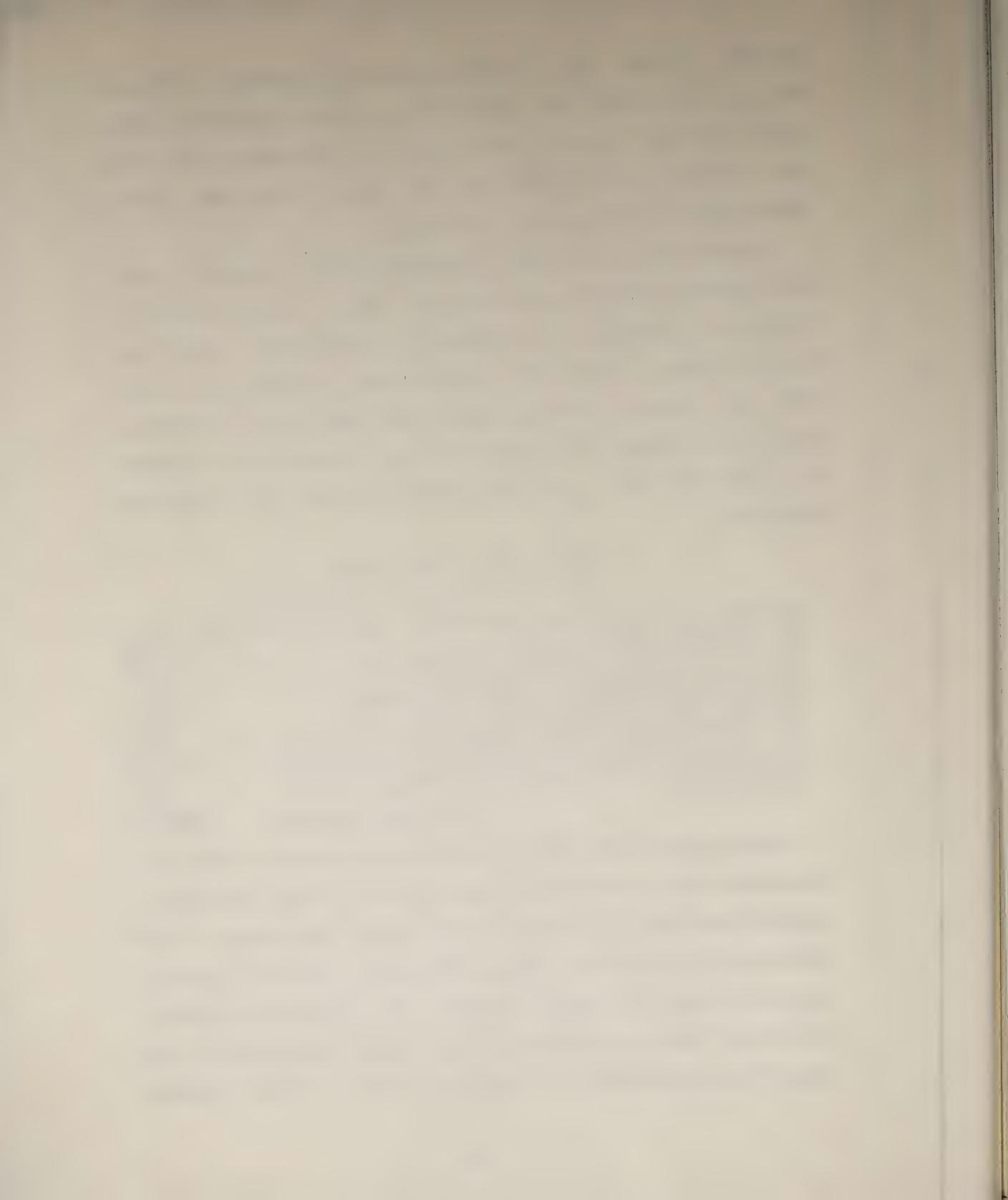
Another man whose name is associated with pioneer days was Wareham G. Clark, who made his claim on May 1, 1843 in Section 3, Township 72 N., Range 17 W., afterward known as Clark's Point. Later this frontiersman fetched his bride from her home in Davis County, then known as Van Buren. Clark was a handy man in many ways, as shown by the record of a bill made out by him to another settler for services rendered:

June and 1st July, 1843

W. G. Clark to J. H. Meyers, Dr.

To driving team 15 days and half, at 37½ cts per day	\$5.81
To carrying chain one day	.37½
To John drove 10 days, 50 cts per day	5.00
To 3 lbs beeswax, 20 cts per lb.	.60
To Splitting 300 rails, 50 cts per 100	1.50
To John cutting house-logs, $\frac{1}{2}$ day	.25
To chopping house logs, 2 days 75 cts per day	1.50
To 4½ days, getting out boards, 75 cts per day	3.37½
To beeswax, \$1.00 paid 75 cts making balance	.25
To 1 bottle	.25
The whole amount--	<u>\$18.91</u>

Among others who moved that spring or summer to the newly-opened lands, were James McIntyre of Urbana Township, a popular and hospitable person whose cabin door always stood wide open for travelers, James Brandon of Jackson Township, and J. L. Repp, who named Jackson and Franklin townships. Altogether there were enough people within neighborly distance to make possible a community Fourth of July celebration.



tion at Clark's Point that summer of 1843. Frank Hickenlooper has described the affair in his History of Monroe County, Iowa (Albia, 1896):

"A tall elm pole was procured from the forest, and a flag was made from material brought from Fort Madison. They had no fife or drum, so somebody whistled Yankee Doodle while they nailed the flag to the pole, and then raised it to be seen for miles away by Indians on the prairie and by the settlers in their rude cabins. The Indians were curious as to what it all meant, and were told that the white men had had a big fight at one time and had beaten the enemy, and that they had big guns and plenty of tea, whisky, etc. Invariably the question would be asked: 'Ain't you got a little whisky left?' The celebration of this occasion devolved mostly upon bachelors, or men who had come to look for land without bringing their families with them. A public square had been laid out at Clark's Point, which then had the prospect of becoming the county seat and around this square the men marched, the whole performance affording a great deal of amusement to the ladies present. There were then but three ladies in the settlement. The flag raised that day lasted two years, and remained all that while a blessed beacon for weary eyes to turn to in this strange far-off land."

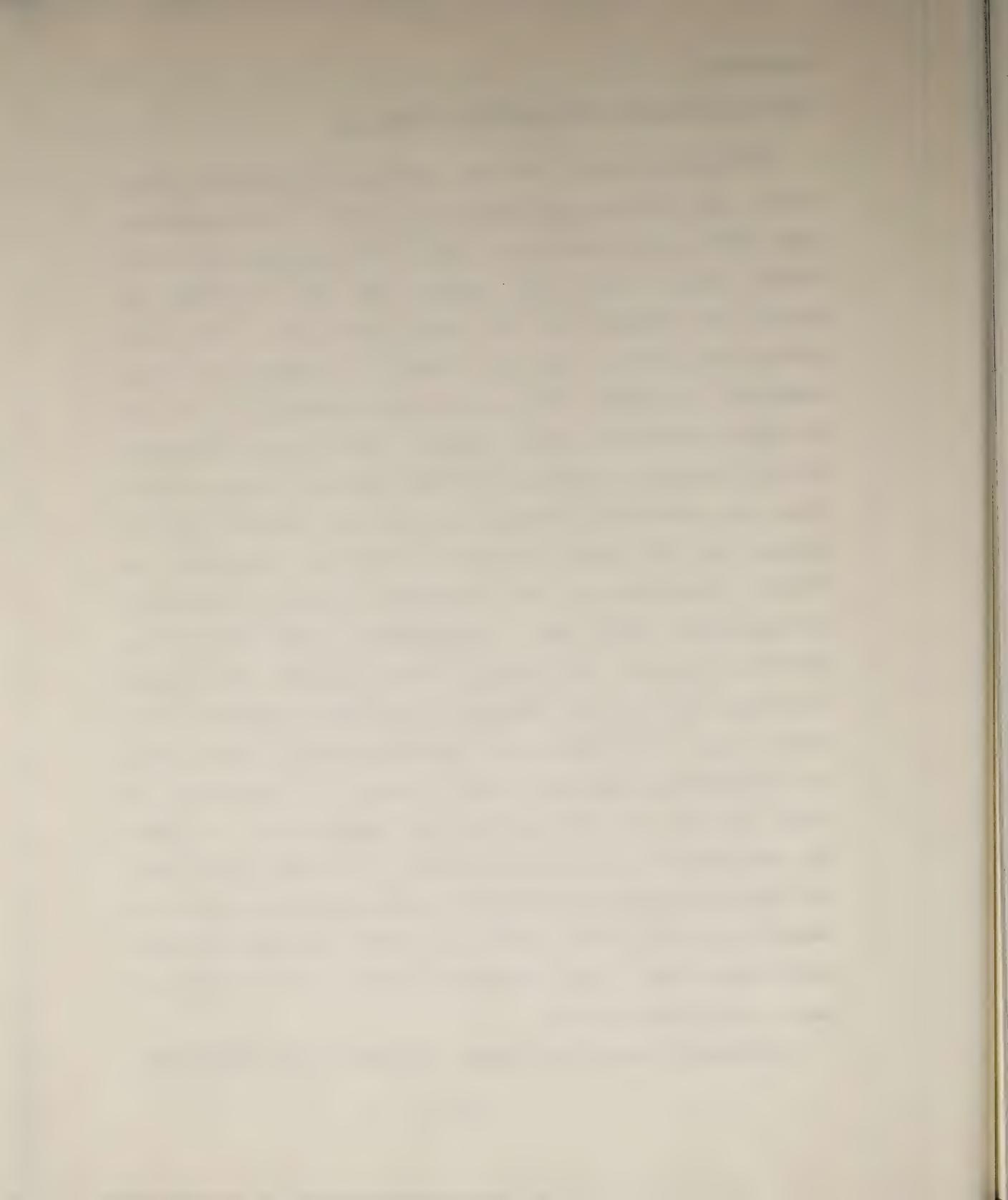


## CHAPTER 5

### BEGINNINGS OF COUNTY AND CITY DEVELOPMENT

Kishkekosh County had been created in February, 1843, but it was not organized until July, 1845. In the meantime, more homes were being built, crops were planted and harvested, young women were coming into the backwoods as brides, and death, too, was taking its toll. The first bride, Mary Searcey, who was united in marriage to Nelson Westcoatt in August, 1844, was the first person to die and be buried within the county limits. Life on the frontier was not easy for a woman, and three months after her wedding, Mrs. Westcoatt succumbed to a fever. The grief of her husband and the nearest neighbors may well be imagined. No funeral accoutrements were available, but very creditable arrangements were made nevertheless. Assisted by his friends, Westcoatt cut down a black walnut tree, hewed puncheons from it, and fastened the sides together with wooden pegs. W. G. Clark, who supplied so many necessities to the settlers, happened to have a length of velveteen on hand, and this was fastened over the rough boards to give the semblance of an elegant covering. The widower must have felt the temptation to desert his claim and move on, but he remained in spite of his sorrow, and built the first sawmill, three miles west of the settlement which, in the following year, 1845, became Albia.

As soon as there were enough children in the neighbor-



hood, a schoolhouse was built on the John B. Gray farm. To make up for lost time, sessions were held during the summer, with Lorania Adams of Blakesburg as the teacher. There was quite a good-sized class -- 15, or even 20, according to some reports -- and the boys and girls came as far as six miles to attend. During the winter they were taught by Dudley C. Barber.

With paper and pencils too scarce a commodity to be used lavishly, the children sharpened their wits by daily exercises in "mental arithmetic." It was the rare boy or girl who could not "figger in his head." Spelling was likewise a daily skirmish in accuracy and quick thinking for the goal was the public monthly "spell-down", wherein the contestants must learn the look and very feel of a word through the pronouncing and spelling of it by syllables. A pleasant combination of history and geography was absorbed from Peter Parley's Universal History; and many a "literary gem" was culled from McGuffey's Fourth Reader to recite "on last day of school." The pupils enjoyed their years at "Pleasant School", as it was called because of the quiet charm of its outlook, and doubtless gave a good account of themselves then and in later life.

In the same year, 1844, Wareham G. Clark, after being chosen Justice of the Peace at a meeting held on his land at Clark's Point, lost no time in laying out a town which he proposed to call Clarksville.

In August 1845, Clark was made probate judge and several

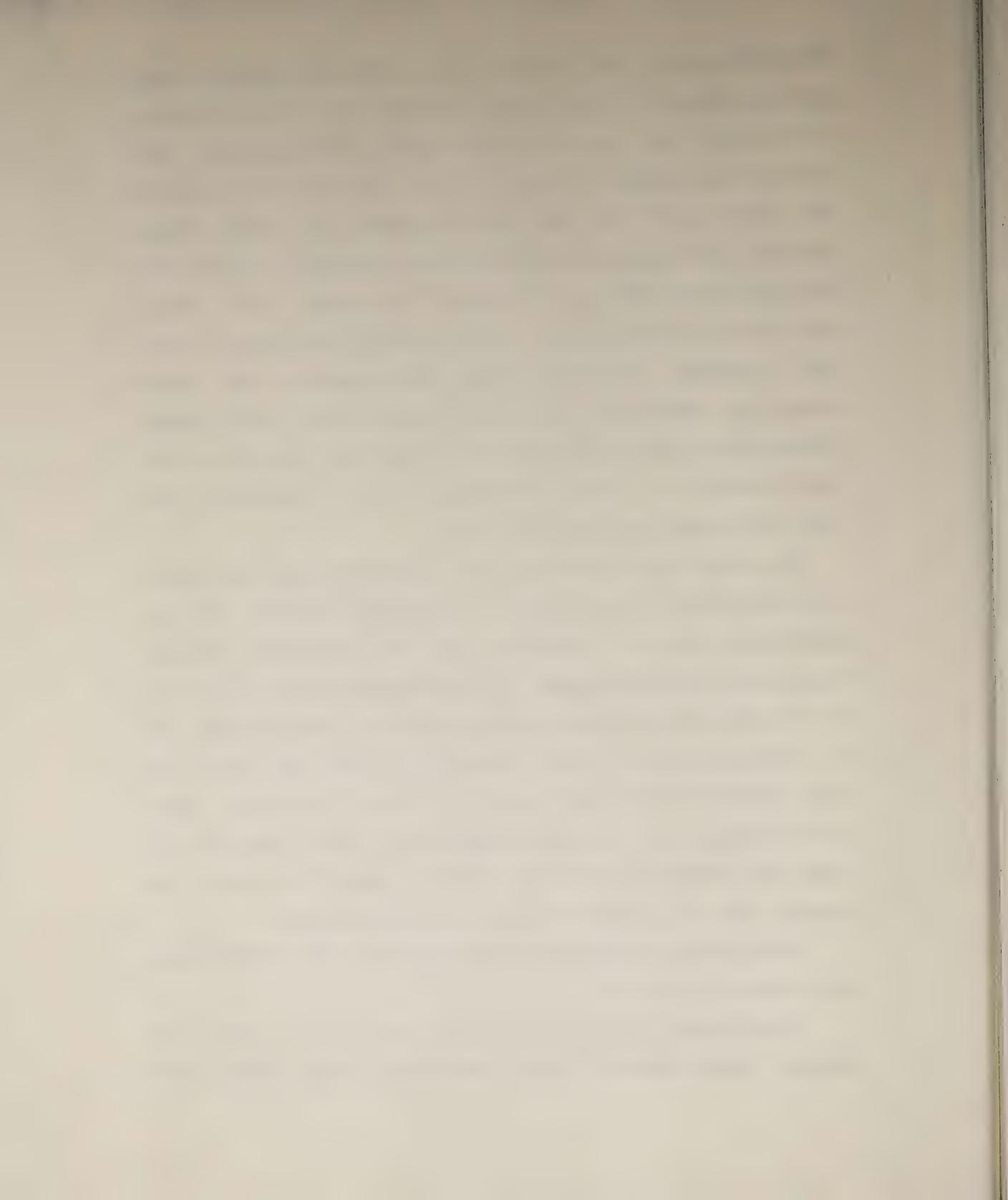


other officials were named -- James Hilton, clerk; T. Templeton, treasurer; John Clark, sheriff; and J. M. McMullen, M. H. Clark and J. S. Bradley, county commissioners. The election took place at Clark's Point in a log cabin where the first term of the District Court was held. Judge Charles Mason presided over the latter session. Judge, lawyers and court officials boarded at the nearby Clark home, but slept on the floorless bare ground of their cabin judicial quarters. Lacking a barn, they usually tied their horses out underneath the trees, but one night when a severe storm arose, they sheltered the animals under the same roof with themselves. From this incident sprang the legend that the first court was held in a barn.

By an act of the territorial legislature, convened under Territorial Gov. Robert Lucas, a committee of three was appointed to locate a judicial seat for Kishkekosh County. These men, James Gallagher of Jefferson County, E. S. Rand of Van Buren County, and Israel Kister of Davis County, met at Wareham G. Clark's home on August 5, 1845 and chose the site of Princeton, later known as Albia. Evidently Clark and his followers were much chagrined at this outcome, for they contested the decision. Their measure to locate the county seat at Clark's Point lost by four votes.

The Board of Commissioners ordered the plat of Princeton to be made as follows:

"The streets shall run due east and west and north and south. Said streets to be sixty feet wide. Each block



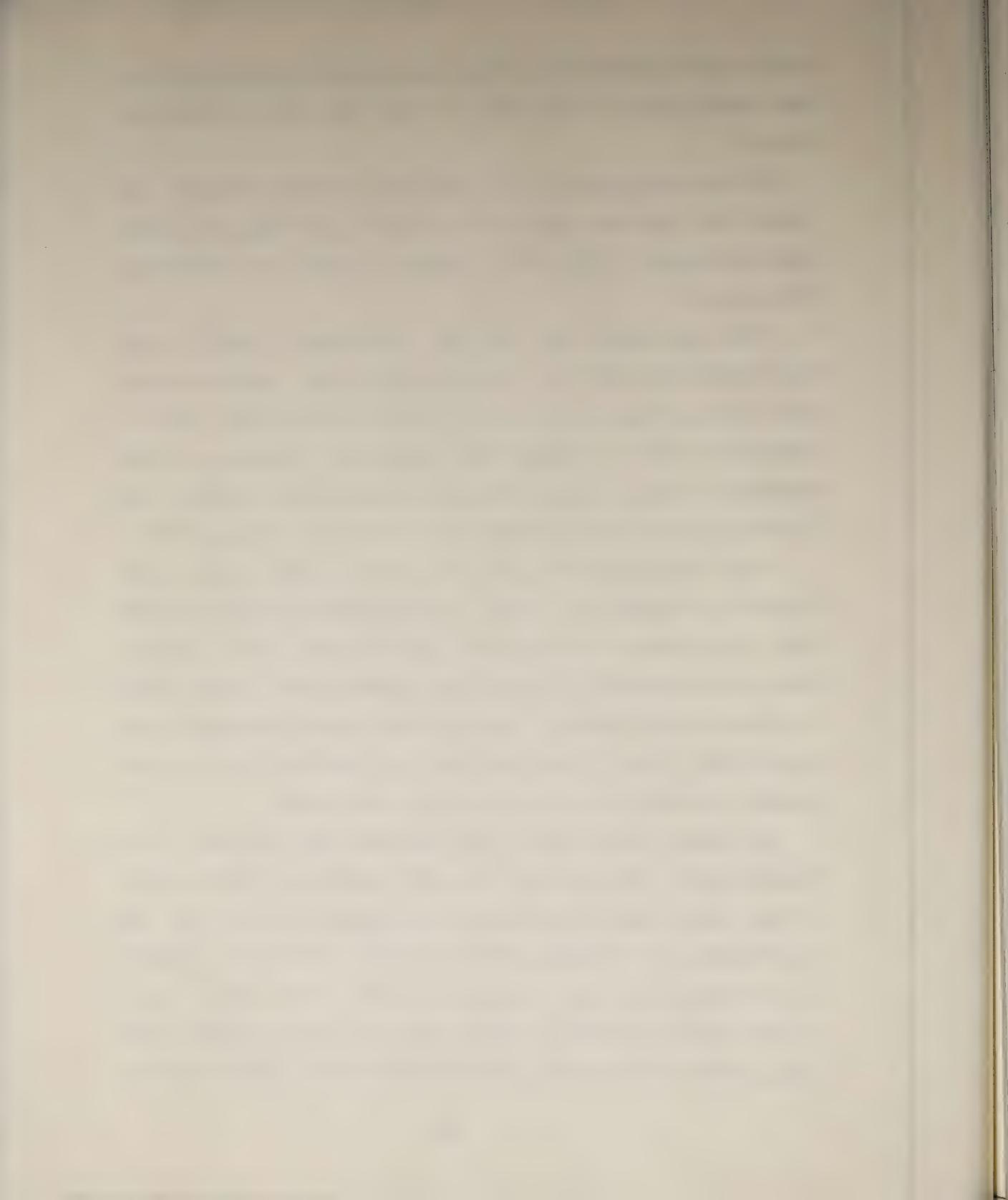
shall contain eight lots, except the four blocks fronting on the Public Square, which shall be half the size of the other lots."

At the April election in 1847, Monroe County voters decided that licenses should be issued for the sale of intoxicating liquor. Eighty-two voted in favor of licensing, 42 against.

When the county seat had been definitely fixed, a log courthouse was built on the east side of the public square. The old court cabin at Clark's Point was converted into a residence; there W. Grant Clark and other children of the Wareham G. Clark family were born. Job Rogers erected the courthouse, for the construction of which he received \$75.

That building, 20 by 20 feet, had a half story above which was reached by a common ladder from the courtroom below. The jurors ascended this ladder to the half story above, and returned by way of the ladder to the court below to report their verdict. The old courthouse remained in use until 1860, when it was torn down and the logs split up into boards to fashion a sidewalk around the square.

In April, 1848, plans were made for the erection of a county jail. It was to be one story high and 16 feet square -- the walls, loft and floor to be composed of oak logs one foot square. A window, 14 by 16 inches, was to be secured by one horizontal and two perpendicular bars, each 1 by 2 inches thick and fixed 4 inches into the logs at each end. Money sufficient for the purchase of lock and iron was to be

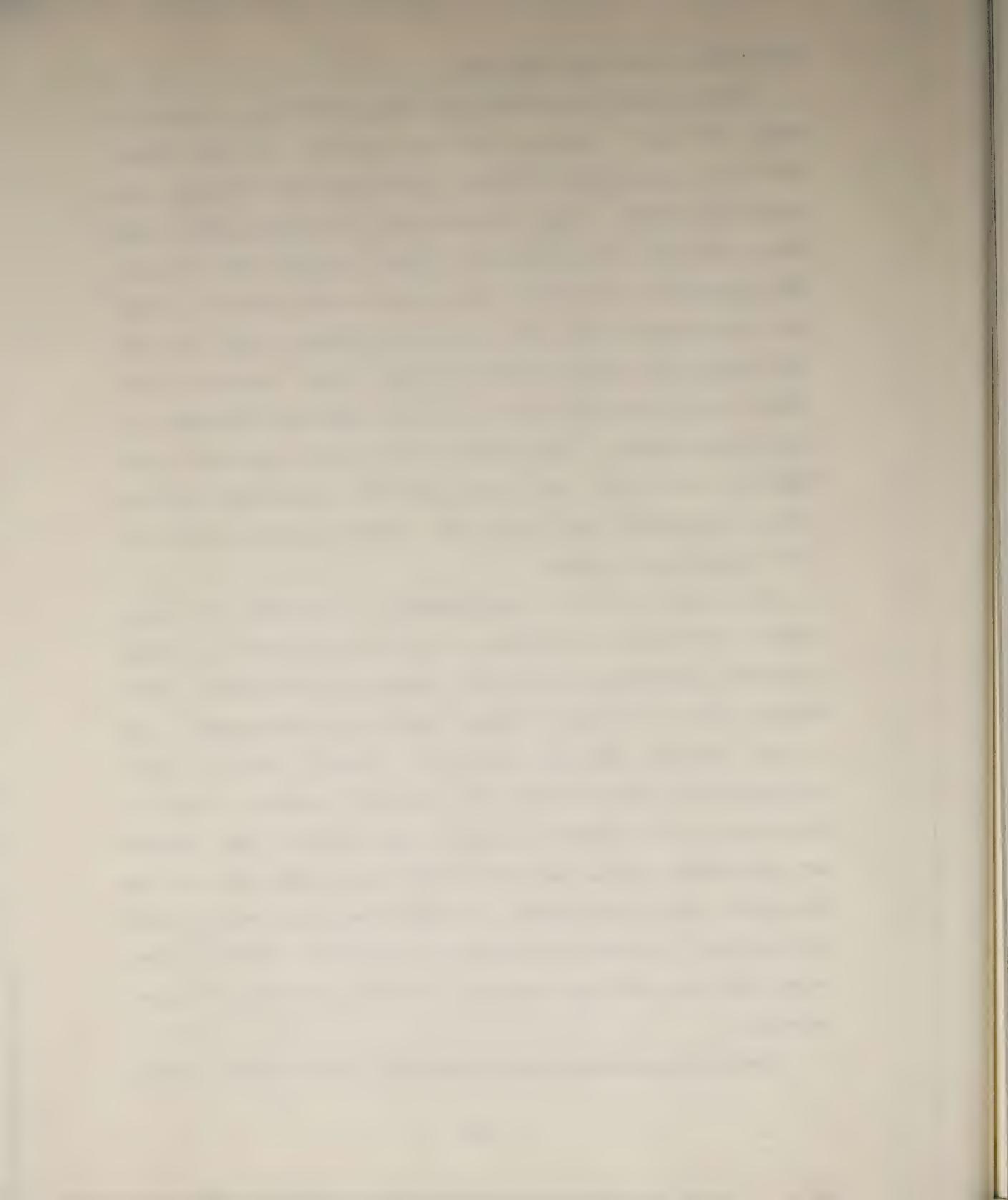


advanced by the commissioners.

While preparations were thus being made for a center in which the legal business of the residents of the county could be transacted, settlers were steadily arriving and laying out farms. They planted corn, potatoes, truck gardens, orchards. The want of a mill was felt very keenly. The journey to the nearest place where grain could be ground was frequently a distance of 60 to 90 miles, a trip by ox-team that took nearly a month and was often rendered hazardous by the swollen streams and the absence of bridges in the rainy seasons. When three or four such trips had to be made in a year the time, work, and risk involved, added to the milling cost, would place the whole expense at three to five dollars per bushel.

The story is told of one pioneer who started for Bonaparte with a grist of milling. At Big Soap Creek he found progress impeded by the waters which had overflowed their banks, and it took some thought for him to figure out a way to get across. Looking about, he finally found a stout cottonwood log wedged above the current. Getting a precarious foothold, he carried a sack of corn across, then another and another until his whole cargo was on the dry land on the other side of the creek. He then took his wagon apart and carried it across by the same piece-meal method; afterwards floating the wagon-bed and swimming his team of oxen--across.

Thomas Hickenlooper built the first mill in the county,



a "corn-cracker" powered by a long sweep worked by the men of the neighborhood. Later, in 1850, settlers took their grinding to Haymaker's mill on Cedar Creek.

John Edwards and his son Moses, former Ohio millers, established a mill at Albia in 1867 which was kept busy until its destruction by fire in 1878. It was patronized by farmers within a radius of 50 miles. A second structure, built immediately to replace the first one, burned in 1886. The third Edwards mill, constructed in the same year, was in use at this writing (1940). It was operated by four generations of the Edwards family, from 1887 to 1929 -- J. A. and Moses Edwards, Morgan, J. Arch., and Shelby Edwards. Shelby and L. B., the last of the family to carry on the traditional business, in 1929 sold out to Jess Knight, an experienced employee of the firm. The mill was operated by steam until 1927, when electricity was installed. A milling crew of five to eight persons was required.

The Monroe County Agricultural Society was organized March 5, 1853, with John G. Sherrod as president; Vincent K. Read, recording secretary, John Mark, corresponding secretary, and Elisha Hollingsworth, treasurer. The first fair, or as it was formally termed, "exhibition", was held in Albia on Oct. 10, 1854. Cash "on hand" amounted to \$226, \$100 of it contributed by the State. Premiums totalling \$138 were awarded.

In 1885, the Monroe County Agricultural Society bought a five-acre tract of ground about half a mile southeast of



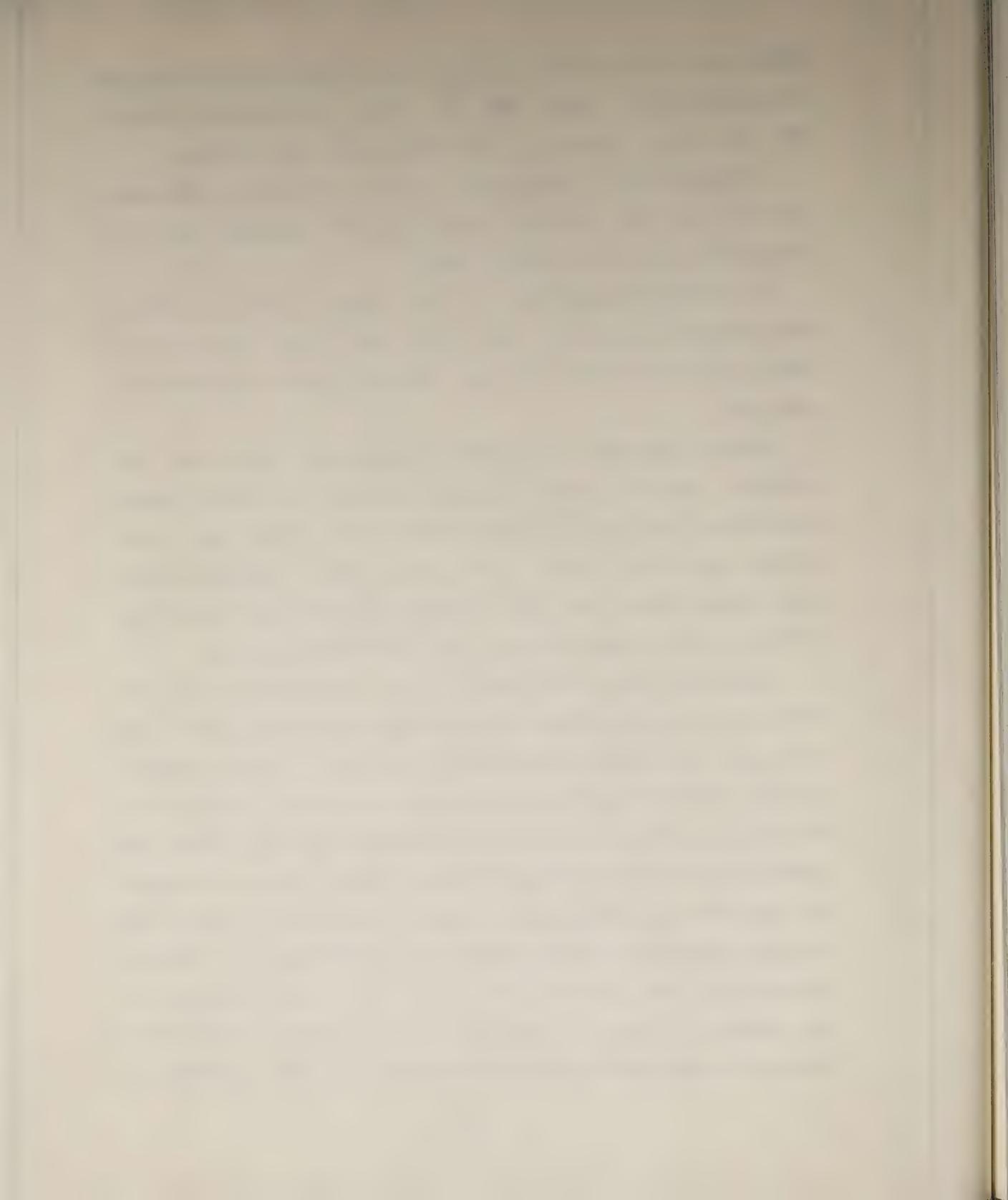
Albia and there enclosed the new "Monroe County Fair Grounds" in canvas walls. That year the State contributed \$165 to the \$313 fund. Premiums aggregating \$216 were awarded.

Prospects for a successful season seemed so favorable in 1856 that the society fenced in the grounds with an eight-foot oak fence costing \$500.

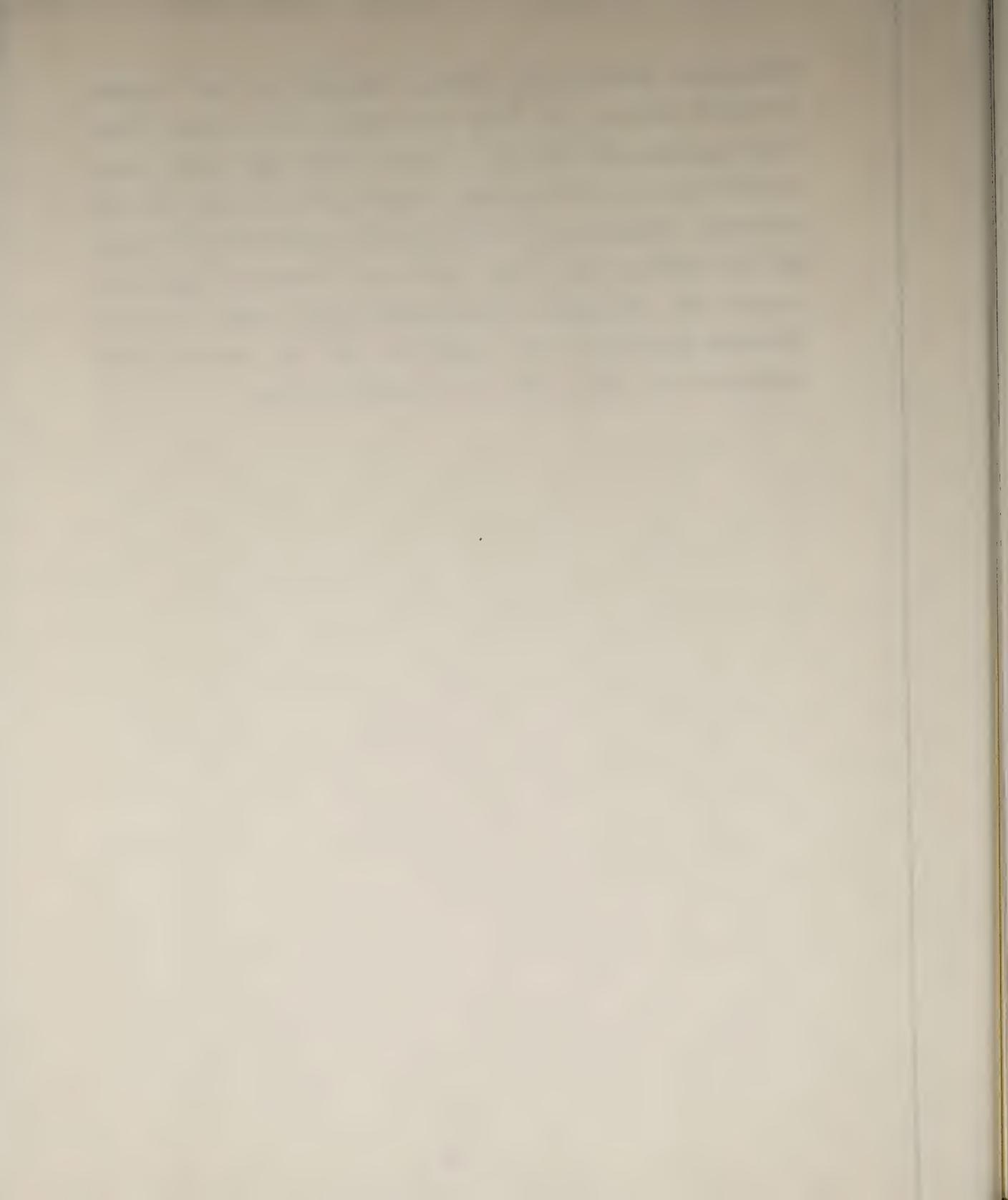
By 1859 the population in the county -- 336 in 1844 -- had increased to 8,377. The land was valued at \$5.18 per acre, and the value of town property was estimated at \$39,354.

Within the next two decades practically all of the desirable land had been acquired, fields of wheat slowly ripened in the sun, and substantial herds of beef and dairy cattle were being raised. The large area of rough-to-rolling land, suited only for pasture purposes, was responsible for the growing importance of the livestock industry.

Orchards, too, were bearing fruit. What was said to be the largest peach orchard in the county, belonging to "Uncle" John Mock near Albia, commanded high prices for its fruit, and in season attracted many longing glances. "Uncle" John had to take the precautions of spreading tarpaulins over the trees at night and posting his sons nearby with watchdogs, to ward off any anticipated raids. Some of the young men in the vicinity evidently accepted the situation as a direct challenge. They planned that one of their number should act as a decoy and jangle a cowbell at the far end of the orchard, to draw the attention of the dogs and the guards. A



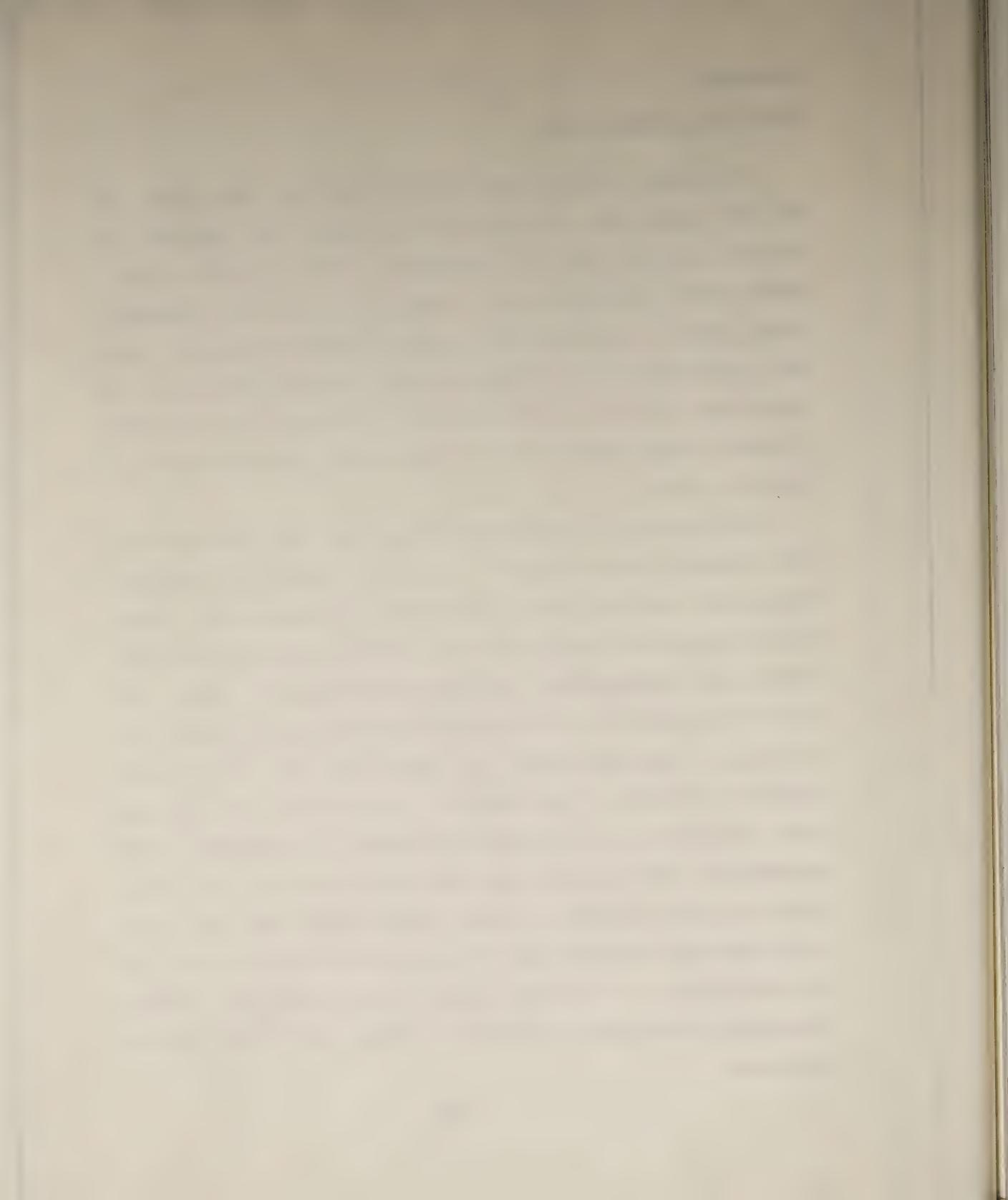
tremendous shouting and barking resounded as the scheme worked to schedule, and when the watchers had returned from their unsuccessful efforts to drive away the "cows", they noticed that one of the trees was not nearly so full as it had been. "Boys will be boys", and the participants in that bit of rascality many years later still recalled their escapade with indulgence, strengthened by the memory of the pleasure displayed by the girls to whom the peaches were presented at a party given on the same evening.



WHEN THE MORMONS VOTED

Kishkekosh County passed into history in 1846, when by act of legislature, the name of the county was changed to Monroe, honoring the fifth President of the United States. Sober-minded statesmen felt a sense of relief that frivolous young ladies in the vicinity would no longer be able to use the interpretation "Kiss-me-by-gosh." They decided also to substitute "Albia" for "Princeton" in referring to the county seat, since another town of the latter name was found to exist in Iowa.

The renaming of the county illustrated the reaction of the dominant white settlers toward the vanishing Indians. Enthusiasm over the tribal chiefs who had signed away their lands manifested itself when new counties were being created during the territorial legislative session of 1843. All counties authorized at that time received Indian names. But a change of feeling had set in before the last territorial session convened; it was thought unprogressive to give any such recognition to the departed Redmen. To emphasize this conviction, not a single such name was chosen for the counties being established in 1846. Names chosen that year honored American statesmen and soldiers, two of them heroes of the Revolution -- Wayne and Jasper -- and among the others, Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Chief Justice Marshall.



Soon after the county had been opened for settlement, the Mormons had sent scouts into this section of the "New Purchase" to seek a desirable location for a colony. A band of the Saints was already living at Farmington, Iowa, but had become desirous of moving farther west. Two of these half dozen scouts -- Aaron Judson and Marshall Tyrrell, separating from their comrades, were lost for several days. Finally these two located in Mantua Township, forming the nucleus for "The Hairy Nation", as the unorthodox and probably rather primitive colony came to be known.

For several years in the mid-forties several thousand Mormons passed across the State and, by 1848, when an important Congressional election was to take place, so many were eligible to vote that they actually held the balance of power. Old Kanesville (also spelled Cainsville), the present site of Council Bluffs, was in particular the stronghold of these people, who usually voted the Democratic ticket. This state of affairs was a source of much worry to the campaigners, particularly the Whigs, who feared the Mormon influence.

Candidates for election to Congress from the First District, of which Monroe County was a part, were Daniel Miller, a Whig, and William Thompson of Mount Pleasant, a Democrat. For judicial purposes, all territory lying west of Monroe County to the Missouri River was part of the county, including what are now Lucas, Clark, Union, Adams, Montgomery and Mills counties.



Dudley C. Barber, clerk, and Andrew Elswick, William McBride, and George Holiday, members of the Board of County Commissioners, (all Democrats) issued an order for the establishment of an election precinct in Pottawattamie County "which lies directly west of Monroe County."

Pottawattamie County was not really directly west of Monroe; it was Mills which bordered the Missouri River there on the western boundary of Iowa, while Pottawattamie lay directly north of Mills, a distance considered to be at least 20 miles north of the northern line of Monroe. The question grew to be a more than rhetorical affair, with the result that Judge Charles Mason, who had been appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in June 1838 when the Territory of Iowa was created, went to Pottawattamie with Judge Weber, a surveyor, to ascertain whether this area should judicially fall within the limits of Monroe County. It was soon learned that these gentlemen surveyed not only the geography, but also the political sentiment to be found in the west, and receipt of information to this effect threw the Whigs "into great consternation." Thereupon the Whigs dispatched their own missionaries to the Mormon colony to convert the Latter Day Saints to the Whig voting viewpoint. According to one story, a Mr. Warren, chairman of the Whig State Committee, first consulted the editor of the St. Louis Republican, and later a man named Pickett undertook to organize the Cainsville district, receiving \$140 for the job. Another source says that the Whigs bid \$1,200 for the solid



Mormon vote, while the Democrats offered only an even \$1,000. Whether this was true or not, on election day, August 7, 1848, the doubtful precinct went unanimously on record in favor of Daniel Miller, the Whig candidate.

Frank Hickenlooper, in his History of Monroe County (1896), offers another explanation: "Whether the assertions relating to bribery are true or not cannot be definitely stated: it is equally probable that the Mormons wanted to try the experiment of changing administrations, since they had been driven around 'from pillar to post,' and had failed to enjoy the rights of religious liberty, as they claimed was guaranteed them under the Constitution. In their exasperation, it is more than likely that they all voted the Whig ticket through a desire to obtain greater justice."

News of the disaster of his party reached J. C. Hall of Burlington, a prominent Democrat, well in advance of the official count, which was to take place in Albia, after the poll-books had been sent on from Kanesville. He immediately departed for Albia and called on Dudley C. Barber, clerk of the Board of Commissioners, at whose cabin the board was to meet. Barber's brother-in-law, Dr. Flint, and Israel Kister of Jefferson County, both active Democrats, were also present, as was a Mr. Mark, later postmaster at Albia, representing the Whigs. A heated discussion followed the announcement of the returns from Kanesville, and while voices rose and faces flushed, someone put on a sleight-of-hand performance. When the disputants turned back to the table



to make another inspection of the poll-book, they were astounded to find the board bare. After a hurried search, it became apparent that the book was not in the room, nor even in the house. It was recalled that Kister had taken his leave rather suddenly, and an accusation that he had carried the book away in his saddlebags brought all the men to their feet, pistols upraised. Indeed, it was related sometime afterward that Kister admitted thrusting the book through a crack in the cabin floor, from which he easily retrieved it later. Violence was narrowly averted, and the Whigs, submitting for the time being, had to concede the election to the Democrats. However, Miller, the defeated candidate, contested the Congressional seat on the grounds of fraud.

When the case was tried in District Court at Keokuk, it was asserted that either Kister or Dr. Flint had secretly placed the poll-book in the saddlebags of the Democratic Judge Mason; and that Mason had not known what had happened until he opened the bags on arriving home at Agency. Defending Thompson and the Democrats, Judge Mason was called upon by the contesting candidate, Miller, to show his authority. Producing what he thought to be the "authority", Mason brought out by mistake the missing poll-book. Miller then told the court that he had just come into possession of evidence for which he had been searching a year.

Judge Mason's political opponents immediately commenced a bitter attack, accusing him of having obtained the poll-book by unfair means. They said outright that he had se-



creted "stolen goods", but he was well able to defend himself, as narrated by J. A. Swisher in The Palimpsest for September 1938:

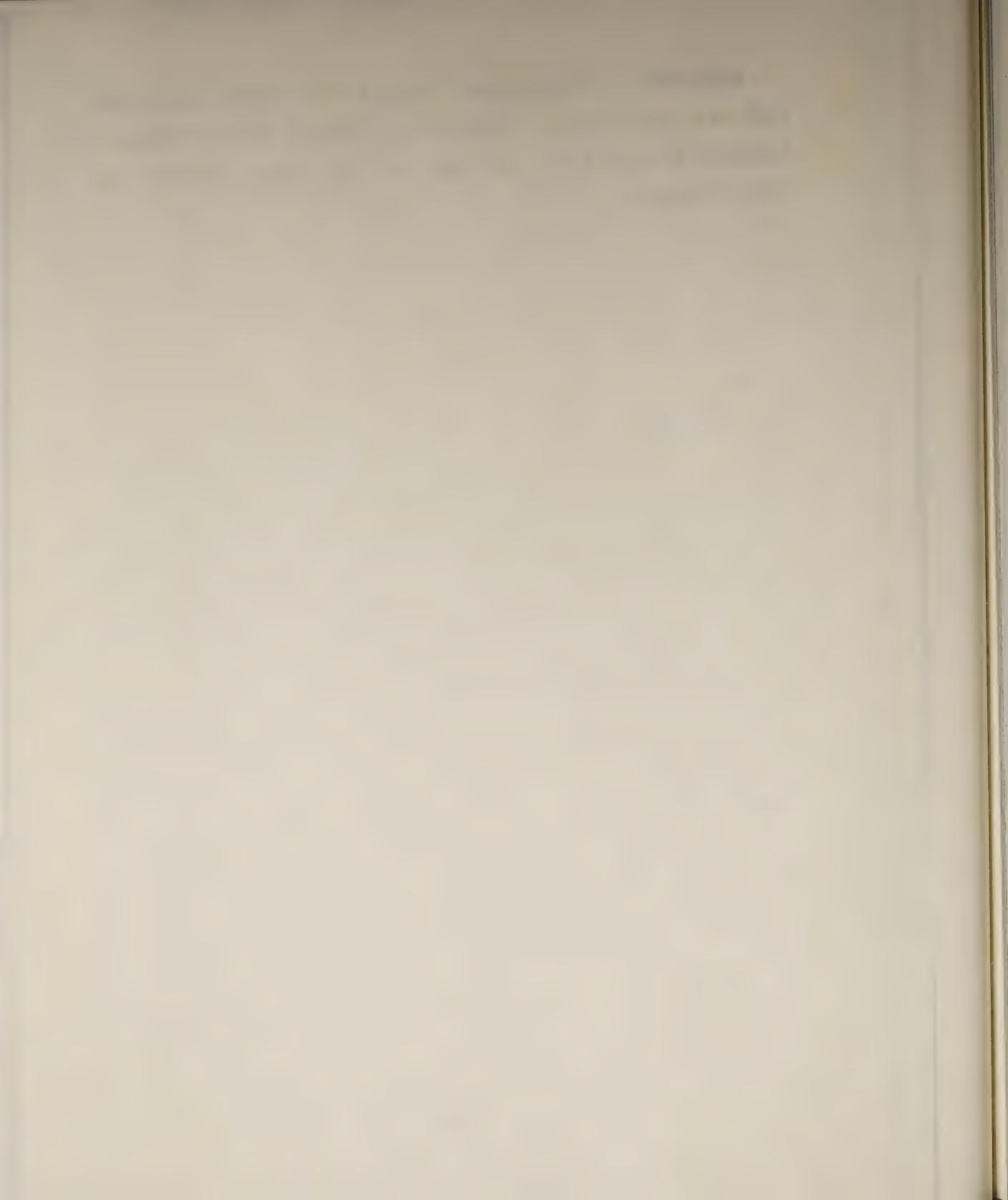
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"By way of analogy one of them said an attorney 'may defend the horse thief when indicted, without censure, but it is no part of his duties to secrete the stolen horse in his stable.' Mason was not, however, vitally affected or embarrassed by the attack. He replied that it must be a 'diseased imagination' that could 'perceive anything improper' in his conduct. He said he had endeavored to represent his client 'in a 'perfectly fair, courteous, and gentlemanly manner', and suggested that it would be 'far more pleasant if this endeavor could be reciprocated.' He added, however, that 'if, from taste, habit, constitutional peculiarity, or any other cause, others choose to pursue a different course', he would not quarrel with them on that account."

On the basis of the Kanesville returns, thus presented, the District Court awarded the Congressional seat to Miller. Thompson, who had already taken his seat in the opening session of the Thirty-first Congress, protested. The court thereupon ruled that neither candidate had been legally elected, and an election should be held in September 1850 to fill the vacancy. The Democrats were victorious in Monroe County, but the Whigs carried the district, and Miller was enabled to take his seat for the last session of the Thirty-first Congress.



Meanwhile, the political dispute over their collective vote was said to be a contributing factor to the Mormons' decision to move to a new land in the West, "beyond the United States."



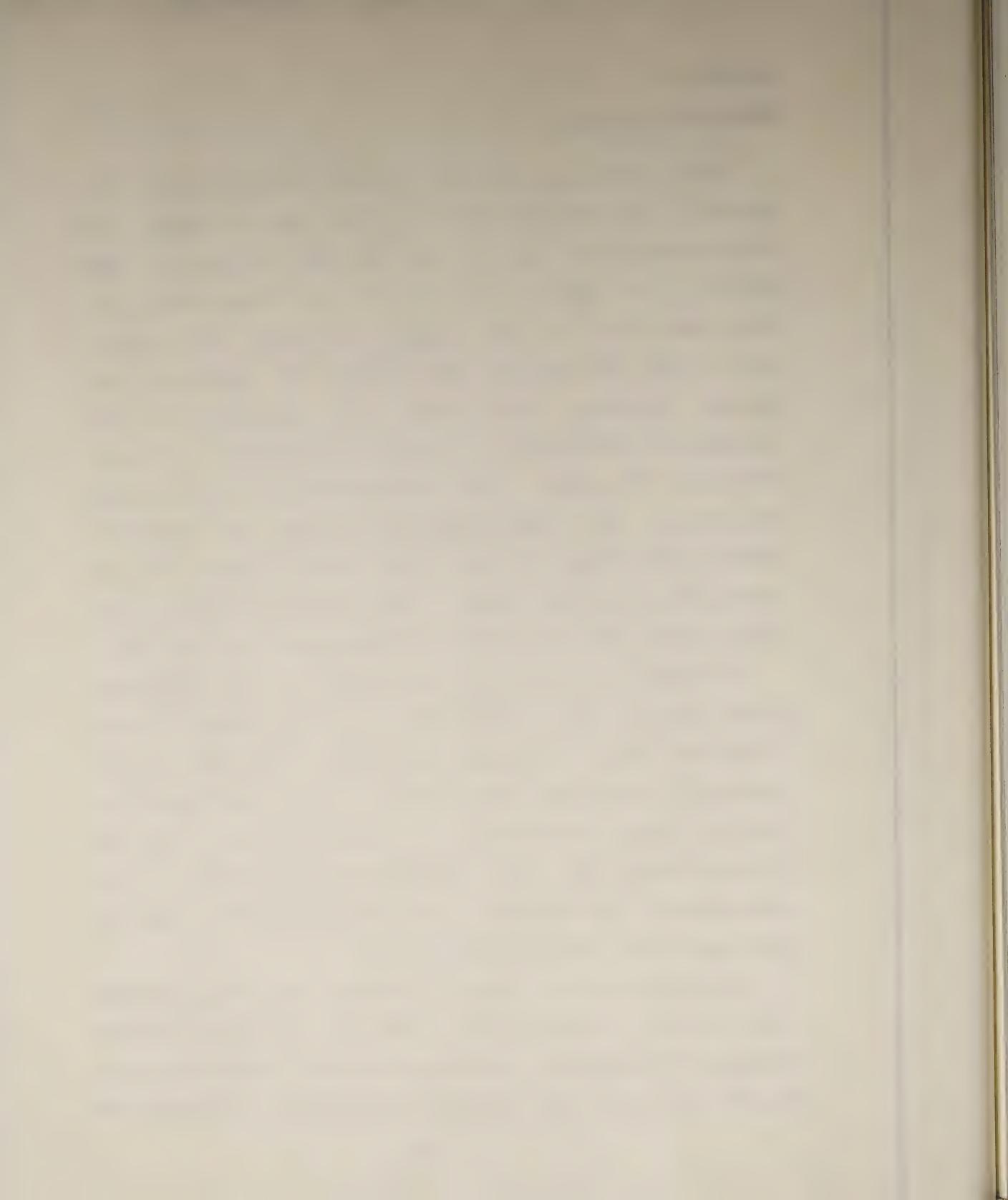
## CHAPTER 7

### CLAIM CLUB TROUBLES

Votes and election returns were not the only causes for disputes among the settlers in those days of county and State development. Many of the residents had chosen land before it was placed on the market for homesteading, and after such filing was made legally possible -- at \$1.25 an acre -- often the settler did not have the necessary cash payment. Naturally, after living upon the land for a year or more, he was unwilling to give it up or yield it to somebody else. To protect such homesteaders, who were called "squatters", the Independent Club Guards of Kishkekosh County, were formed. Officers were chosen to serve from the first Monday in April, 1844, to the first day of April, 1845. Their duties were set forth in Article IV of the Club Laws:

"It shall be the duty of the Captain, or, in the absence of the Captain, of the Lieutenant, or in the absence of both, of the Best Men, to call upon the company to appear at command, and proceed with said officer to hear and decide all right to claims, according to our claim laws, and to put the claimant having the right to said contested claim in full and peaceable possession of his claim, and protect him in said possession fully and effectually."

It was furthermore stated in Article VII: "Any claimant whose name is attached to our claim laws may appeal to the Captain of the Guards, and state to him his grievances, or, in the absence of the Captain, to the other officers, and



they shall protect said claimant fully in possession of his claim, without further trouble to said claimant."

Captain Alexander Kemp (who was a gunsmith by trade), and Lt. James McRoberts were supported by a number of strong-armed men: John H. Meyers, Hayden Smith, John Clark, Samuel Harbin, Thomas Coopedge, A. B. Preston, S. F. Warden, James McDavis, William Scott, William Gordon, Riley Westcoatt, Nelson Westcoatt, J. C. Boggs, James Hilton, Alfred B. Collier, James Gordon, James Stephenson, and Israel Green.

On several occasions, the assistance of the Claim Club was invoked to drive invaders away from land already in possession and dwelt upon by the claimants. Among the squatters who often received the protection of the club were the people known as The Hairy Nation -- fellow-colonists of the Mormon scouts who had earlier prospected for a new home.

"They were border men breathing hatred to their enemies, the Missourians", and they learned fighting as a trade, for the purpose of sometime being able to get even with them.

James Coen, in his Sketches of Early Times describes the nation well: "These people were not of the usual intellectual calibre of New England people, and for some time they had implicit faith in Joseph Smith. They were rough, from having lived with rough Missourians, and had learned from them how to use a bowie knife and a gun: besides this they could outdistance their masters in the matter of drinking whisky. But they had great personal courage and endurance, and were generous to a fault with their friends. In



short, they ware a hearty, rather reckless, bold, stirring class. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, many of their descendants, who still prided themselves as belonging to the 'Nation', went into the Union Army with great ardor, were the most efficient of fighters, and nearly one-half of their able-bodied men died in defense of the old flag." The picturesque nickname no doubt was bestowed in recognition of the luxuriant whiskers -- chin and side -- decorating the faces of the men of the 'Nation'."

Rivals of the Nation were the Seceders, an organization of Associate Presbyterians. Trouble often arose between the two groups. The Seceders did not recognize the validity of the Claim Club regulations because they were not based on any legal right. "If they found a tract of land on the plat at the land office marked by a 'V', which meant vacant, though a 'squatter' occupied it through the support of the 'club', they felt little hesitancy in preempting it or 'jumping the claim'."

When the Seceders built a schoolhouse at Half-way Prairie and fitted it up with a stove instead of a fireplace, and then began to build a church, this was considered an overt declaration of war. For what purpose could they need a church, unless to be used as a fort? The pulpit was evidently designed as a sally-port from which the besieged might emerge in a final encounter after the stronghold had been invaded.

"At length these strained relations culminated in an



open rupture. A man named Geo. P. Little entered a forty-acre "claim" on Miller's Creek. Little was a Seceder and a 'squatter' claimed the tract. The 'Club' of course, protested vigorously, but Little paid no attention to their threats. One day in mid-winter, he borrowed a horse and rode to Albia, armed with an old 'pepperbox' pistol. That very day the 'club' had met to take final action in his case. On his return from Albia the 'Club' discovered him and gave chase. Little took the Eddyville trail with about twenty of the mob in swift pursuit. The pursuers gained on him, and finally one of them caught up with him and attempted to seize his horse's bridle. Little held his revolver in his hand, ready for any acts of violence but as the pursuer reached the bridle his horse stumbled and the fall discharged the pistol. The pursuer then kept his distance, thinking the shot had been aimed purposely at himself. Little then took refuge in the house of Henry Elder, hotly pursued by the mob. The man who had caught up with Little was his friend Andy Robb, who was trying to assist in Little's escape. He soon arrived at Elder's and seizing a sled-standard, sauntered out into the road among the mob, charged them right and left, threatening the entire crowd with destruction if they did not retire. They retired and a few days later the 'Club' met and resolved to terminate the Seceders, wipe them off the face of the earth and raze their church to the ground."



A few days later the Nation met and decided to wipe out the Seceders and to begin by burning their church, fixing the time for the bonfire. Runners were dispatched to call out the chiefs and braves of The Hairy Nation, and all their doughty supporters. The war-whoop was sounded throughout the land, the gathering of the invading forces continued until the evening of the appointed day, when they took up their line of march for the Seceders church. "Meanwhile, news from the war dance had reached the 'Seceders' who, disdaining to sue for peace, took up the hatchet and prepared for the impending conflict. Messengers were sent from house to house..."

Next day, when conflict seemed inevitable, a committee was sent to the church to demand a surrender. The besieged refused and stated they were determined to fight it out. After some parley as to the causes of the "war", the committee returned to camp. While some hotheads demanded immediate "invasion", others preferred diplomacy. Finally delay cooled the heated passions, a truce was arranged, and the "war" was over.



VANISHED VILLAGES--AND TOWNS THAT REMAIN

The first post office in Monroe County was established at Clarksville, or Clark's Point, in 1846, where the enterprising W. G. Clark carried the mail free of charge from Eddville.

Another post office was at Uroana City, a settlement on the "Old Southwest Trail" leading through Uroana Township. First a sawmill was built there, then a flour mill. The place flourished briefly after it was made a station on the stage route, and a school, stores and blacksmith shop appeared. Stagecoaches carried mail and passengers to and from the little city, and when the stage came rattling down the hard dirt road to the post office, nearly all the townsfolk managed to be present to exchange the time of day with one another and gather the latest news of what was going on in the world. A typical stage in the Iowa of the 1840's is described by B. F. Shambaugh in his Old Stone Capitol Remembers:

"The top was flat in order to accommodate baggage. The 'boot' in the rear also carried some of the luggage of the passengers. Brightly painted throughout, the panels were decorated with scrolls of landscapes.' Three seats on the inside accommodated nine passengers with comfort.

"The stagecoach driver, who occupied an elevated seat on the outside in front, was regarded as a man of some consequence. He usually wore a 'flannel shirt, corduroy breeches



stuffed into high boots, a well worn hat or cap, and a fur or leather coat.' As a rule he was a man who smoked, chewed tobacco, and on occasion used profane language. Weathered by rain and wind and snow, his face harmonized with his clothes. At the taverns and other stopping places he entertained the guests with stories of the road. He was the autocrat or king of the highway. When approaching or leaving town he would blow his horn, crack his whip, and urge his horses to greater speed."

After a few years the stagecoach passed out of existence, and with it went Urbana City. For a brief span the settlement had known the bustle of prosperity. Teams of heavy horses were led to the blacksmith shop to be shod; in the distance sounded the hum of wheat being ground between millstones, and of steel biting into thick logs of black walnut or of oak. There had been two general stores where shoppers might buy anything from notions to suits of clothes. The gristmill lasted longest of all, but finally it disappeared and its site, like those of the other industries of Urbana City, reverted to farmland.

And so the pattern of settlement in the county developed. Towns sprang up -- seemed destined to endure, and then faded away. Others flourished, but changed their names.

Immigration poured into Monroe County in 1856, and paper towns sprang up everywhere. A village was laid out in almost every neighborhood. Fairview, later called Cuba, was settled that year in Mantua Township. A stronghold of the



Hairy Nation, it no longer exists as a community, but the Dunkers, or German Baptists, of the vicinity have an organization of about 30 members. Eldora (Eldorado), platted by Knight and Mattos in Cedar Township, had two houses, a brush knoll, and a few stakes. Osprey consisted of one house or tavern, of which a Mr. Evans was proprietor. Smithfield, later known as Weller, was another one-house town. Hollidaysburg, named for its founder, Holliday, never achieved substance. The coming of the railroad and the establishment of mining camps in the following years led to a mushroom growth of coaling centers and vagrant settlements.

Lovilia, Union Township, is one of the scenic beauty spots of the county, a rolling terrain, gently sloping east from a grove of timber on the west. D. B. Dixon, the earliest resident, platted the town in 1853, built his house that same year, and opened a store. A post office was also established. The meeting house, a frame Baptist Church, occupied the site where the Lovilia schoolhouse was later built. The town established here grew to be one of the foremost in Monroe County.

The Seceders, a branch of Presbyterians, built a cabin for worship in 1849 in Pleasant Township, at the northeast corner of the county. They named the place Pleasant Corner because of the pleasing view from an elevation where one could look over miles of broken waves of prairie. The site was still in use many years later, when the Methodists held regular services there in a building of their own.



Not far away in the same township, the mining town and railroad station Frederic was named for Frederick Joy, former president of the Burlington and Missouri Railroad. By some chance the final "k" was left off, and the original spelling was preserved. Many Swedish people helped develop the place and supported a church society known as the Berg-holm.

Avery, Mantua Township, was originally known as Coffman, for John Coffman, who had bought the land from the Government. After the village had become identified with nearby Avery Creek, the name of that stream came into general use. The first settlers are believed to have taken up land prior to 1860, since years later one of the older residents could recall Civil War soldiers on furlough dancing in her father's house.

The town, actually founded in 1866, consisted of only a few houses in 1870. There were enough children and young folks, however, to require a school. First the pupils attended the old Pond Rock school north of town. Then Andrew Stewart, director, and Joseph Huston, teacher, worked for a new one-room building to accommodate the growing student body. By 1870 the enrollment was 125, including many of mature age. Harve Tedrow, teacher, was said to be "quick on the draw" with his pencil: any student who ventured "out of line" received a crack on the head from a pencil thrown by Tedrow.

Lying as it did in the heart of the Cherokee coal vein,



Avery's growth and prosperity were aided substantially by the mining industry.

E. W. Byers owned the first "Smoky Hollow" mine at Hynes, two miles southeast of Avery, when the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad went through in the late 1860's. Known as No. 7, or the Bradley mine, in honor of the Bradley brothers, owners of the land, the mine was sold to the Union Coal Company (later the Peabody Company, a concern said to have operated 30 mines in Iowa). Government keys for the post office arrived January 16, 1900; the office was established in the coal company's store and named Hynes in honor of F. Hynes, postmaster. Nevertheless, the popular name "Smoky Hollow" clung.

Melrose, Jackson Township, was built on land first claimed by John Drew in 1847. T. C. Stewart, storekeeper, opened his shop for business in 1860-61, and a post office was later established, with J. D. S. Peacock, postmaster. Sarah Prindle was the first schoolmistress. The town was platted in 1866.

Stacyville, Guilford Township, a center for Monroe County's activities, was settled about 1850. In 1854-55, Catholics built a log church in the northeast corner of Hugh Fitzpatrick's field. The pioneers who had participated in the services then spent years in planning and working for a large church. Over a long period they hauled gray limestone by oxteam, until finally the cornerstone of St. Patrick's Church was laid May 19, 1864, by Bishop Smyth of Dubuque.



The handsome building, 100 feet long, 60 feet wide and 50 feet high, with its cross pointing skyward, was to remain in use for many years. It was designed by Father Clifford.

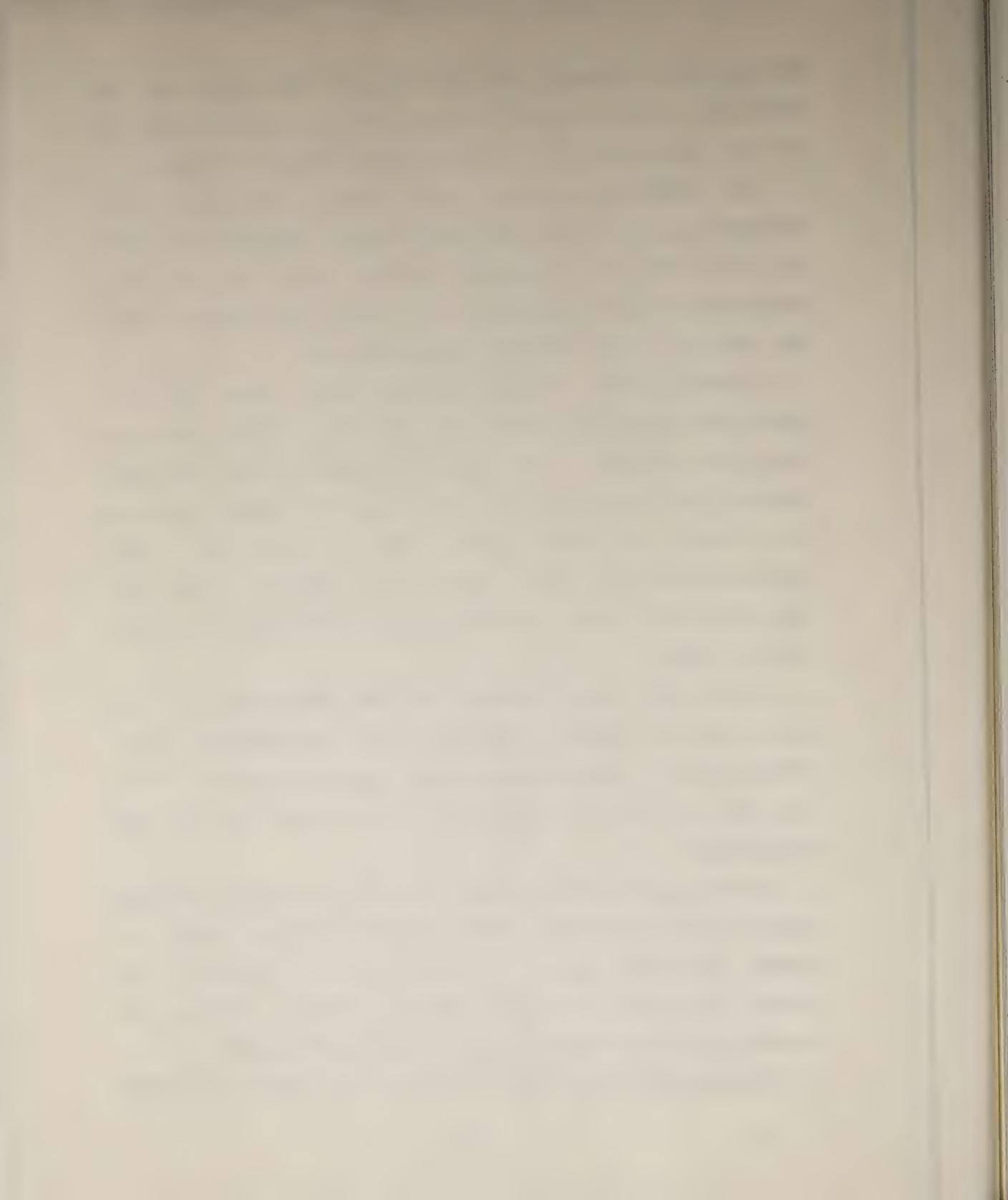
The church has always been closely identified with Georgetown, one of the older settlements, which was a growing town when the stagecoach rolled over the prairies. Georgetown's half-century-old post office was closed in 1908 and mail was routed through Melrose instead.

Foster, Monroe Township, sprang up in early railroad days, near North Soap Creek. Its station was first known as Soap Creek Biding. When mining enterprises made this community a boom town, the name was changed to Foster, honoring E. I. Foster of Cedar Rapids, principal investor. Many English and Welsh miners moved there and the population, once 800, afterwards fluctuated with the varying activities of the mines.

About 1890 Frank Fritchie laid out Minerfield, a half mile west of Foster. Only one house was erected. Frank Hickenlooper's Illustrated History of Monroe County states that "the streets and avenues remain on paper and are well preserved."

Hiteman, Guilford Township, platted in 1890, developed into a large and active mining center on Cedar Creek. At times its mining population consisted of American (both white and negro), English, Welsh, Swedish, German, and Scotch, and once reached a peak of more than 1,500.

Clarksville, originally Clark's Point, where the trader-



settler W. G. Clark laid out a town in 1845, faded out of existence. The family, however, remained prominent in Monroe County affairs. Clark and his wife, the former Jane Rankin of Ohio, had 12 children; one daughter and 11 sons. Of these, W. Grant and John R. Clark, were especially long-lived. The latter, an ardent Democrat, became proprietor of the Monroe County News in 1896.

The elder Clarks sold their original property in 1855, intending to move to Texas; but deterred by illness in the family, purchased another homestead, four and a half miles southwest of Albia. A reminder of early fenceless days lingered afterward on this farm in a "buffalo wallow" of unusual depth and extent near the district building known as "Buffalo Wallow School." The depression was 11 feet deep on the north side in 1847; the east and west sides gradually sloped down to the south, and the whole was so wide that for years the bottom could be used as a ball ground. Later, the open end was banked up to from a pond. In the beginning the wallow was a moist piece of ground which wandering buffalo discovered and began to paw, stamping it and lifting it with their horns and then "wallowing" in the oozy mud until their bodies were covered with it. Then they would walk out on the lowest side, carrying a thick coating of mud that served as a protection from buffalo flies. Soon the hollow they had rubbed in the earth was large enough for half a herd to rest in during the hot noon hours.

Hocking, first known as Coal Creek, was started by the



Hocking Coal Company in Troy Township, 1893. The mining industry grew and maintained the community for many years. According to old-timers, the valley surrounding the coal dump was very wild when first settled, and so many reptiles kept crawling out of the brush that the miners began to call the place "Rattlesnake Gulch."

Albia, the county seat, became an incorporated town in 1859, a city of the second class in 1876.

A. C. Barnes, editor and proprietor, established Monroe County's first newspaper, the Albia Independent Press, October 10, 1854. The editorial office was held in the old courthouse, which had been abandoned and was said to be "only fit to be abandoned for every other purpose." Barnes found little to write about, but managed to display a cheerful amount of philosophy and the determination to succeed.

In the second number of the Press, dated October 24, 1854, before Barnes had been able to receive any exchanges, he acknowledged that he was "indebted to our obliging postmaster" for the news he was able to print. Of his headquarters, he wrote: "Eight years ago the old courthouse in which our office is kept, on the east side of the public square, was the only house in Albia. It was used for courthouse, meeting house, shows, and amusements, and whatever suited the conveniences and pleasure of the oldest inhabitants. Since then, it has been a dwelling, a cabinet and wagon shop, and to what other uses devoted in so short a time we know not: but we guess no one dreamed it would so

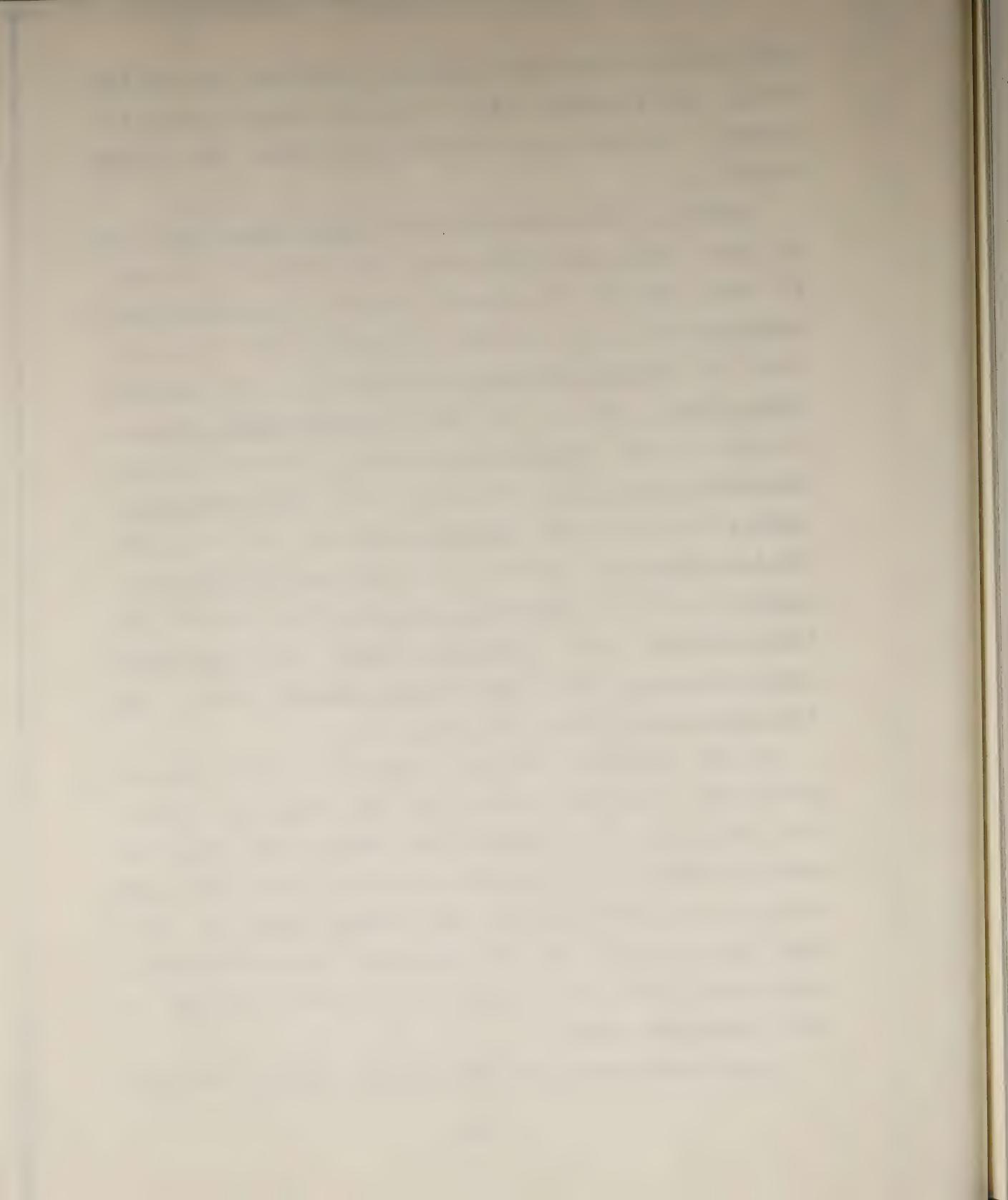


soon contain a live editor, printing apparatus and all his family. The editor's cow and calf are outside of any inclosure. Hope they won't be allowed to starve the coming winter."

Matthew A. Roob established the Weekly Albia Union May 20, 1862. During the forty-year period from 1854 to 1896, 17 other journals were started in Albia. The Albia Weekly Republican was first published November 5, 1857. Then followed the Monroe County Sentinel, January 4, 1860; The Jefferson Blade, January 26, 1860; The Albia Weekly Gazette, November 9, 1861; The Albia Republican, November 17, 1869; The Spirit of the West, February 2, 1870; The Reform Weekly Leader, March 12, 1874; The Albia Reporter, April 10, 1875; The Industrial Era, September 1875; The Monroe County Plain-dealer, May 1877; The Iowa Plaindealer, June 4, 1878; The Albia Democrat, 1879; The Albia Herald, 1889; The Monroe County Progress, 1890; The People's Defender, 1891; The Albia Republican, October 24, 1894.

In the constantly changing picture of Monroe County's growth many towns have sprung up to play conspicuous roles, and then fallen into obscurity or disappeared altogether when the causes of their growth ceased to exist. Some were built on roads that ceased to bear traffic when the railroads came through. Some represented the dreams of hopeful, progressive frontiersmen who were earnestly planning to build prosperous cities.

At one time, about 1910, Buxton was a mining town with



over 7,000 people. The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Company invested almost \$6,000,000 in buildings and mine equipment and coal rights near there. Five mines in the neighborhood produced 7,500 tons of coal daily. Buxton had several suburbs, of which Cooper Town was one. Buxton in its heyday was a considerably larger town than Albia in 1940, and had four churches, four schoolhouses, and theatres, factories, hotels, restaurants -- in short, every modern thing of its time. Today a church and a farmhouse are all that remain of old Buxton.

Mining operations started in Lockman in 1896. The present mine (1940) is operated by the Miller Creek Coal Company. The town was named for Thomas D. Lockman, formerly an official of the First National Bank of Albia.

The mining camp of Maple (Wanlock) was operated by the Maple Coal Company and was very active from 1917 to 1924 when the mines shut-down and the place became a ghost town. White City was a mining camp on a spur of the Northwestern Railroad in Bluff Creek Township, and Miami was a lively mining town about 1910 in the southwest corner section 4 Bluff Creek Township.

Consol, between Cedar and Wayne townships, at one time produced 5,300 tons of coal in a single day. Ward, Cedar Mines, Chisolm, Coalton, Fraker, Haddock, Rexfield, Hilton, and Hoover, are familiar names to many who remember the now abandoned camps.

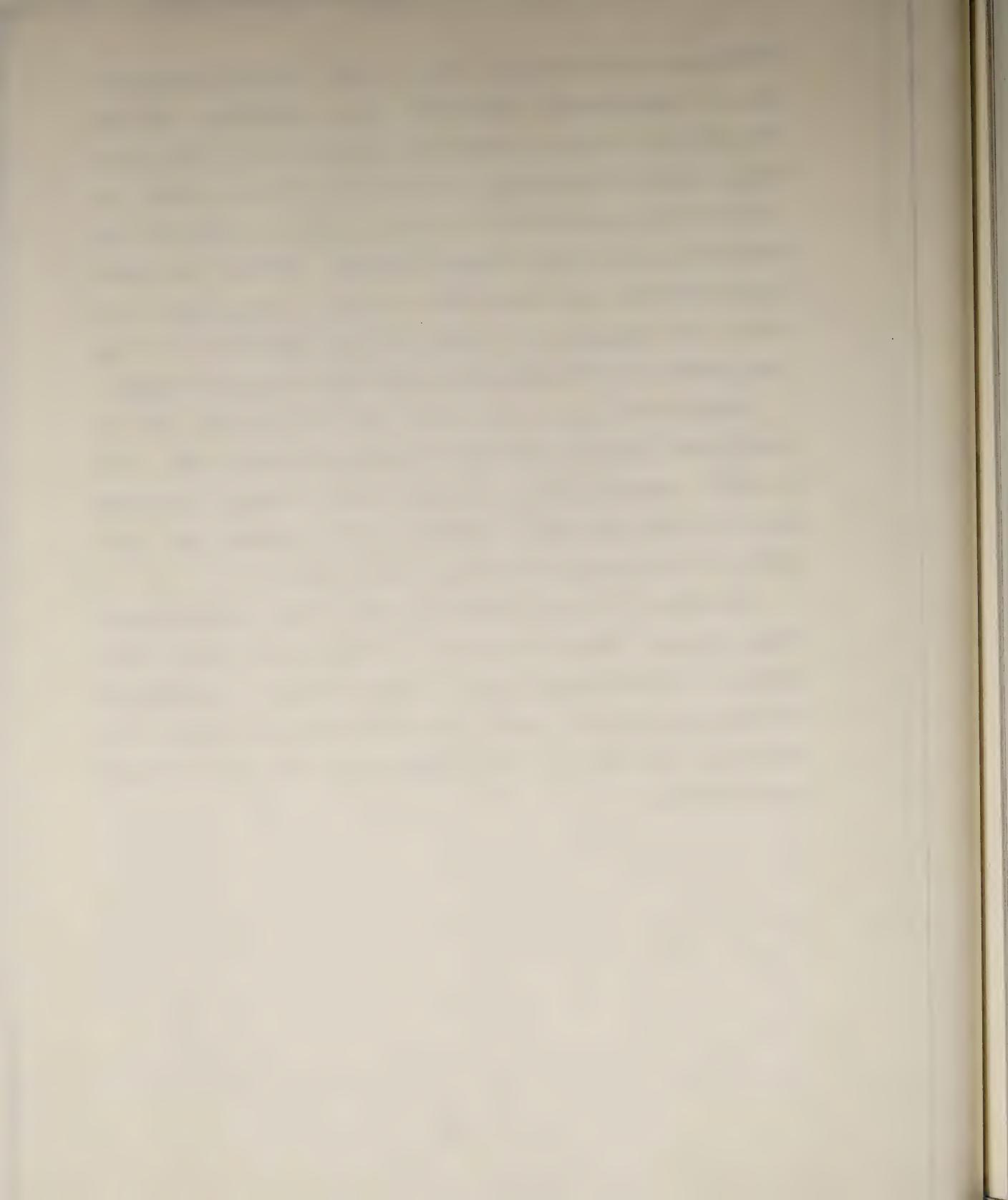
Hummaonna, a former post office in the center of Urbana



Township, was discontinued when a store was built across the line in Davis County, about four miles southeast. Hagerty was a station on the Wabash Railroad, in Bluff Creek Township. Hickory was listed as an abandoned town in 1896. Selection was a post office four miles south of Albia, on the Centerville, Moravia, and Albia Railway. Tyrone was a Burlington Station nine miles west of Albia. Maxon was a station a mile northeast of Albia at the intersection of the Iowa Central and Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroads.

Bluff Creek was a post office in the northern part of Bluff Creek Township from 1859 to 1863, and again from 1886 to 1907. Brompton was a station on the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad. Bucknell was a village six miles north of the junction of county roads A and H.

Fairview, in Mantua Township, was a small mining town. Only a single foundation remains to show where once was a store. A German family named Yager operated a brewery at Bridgeport, where in 1875 there were about ten houses occupied by the workers. The foundation of the brewery is all that remains.



## CHAPTER 9

### THE CIVIL WAR

The outbreak of the Civil War did not disturb the settlement and prosperous growth of Monroe County, although many volunteers from the district served in the Union forces. Some were "vigorous young farmers and mechanics"; most of them were sons of the settlers who had been cultivating the region since the early 1840's.

In Monroe County, as in general throughout Iowa, popular sentiment upheld the Union and the North, but a few families were known to have sympathized with the southern cause. No conflicts or hostile incidents have been recorded, however, possibly because the men who were of military age are said to have "skipped to the far west" to avoid the draft.

The quota of volunteers requested from the State of Iowa was listed at 49,405, of which Monroe County's share was 619. A large proportion of volunteers from the county was enlisted with the 6th, 22nd and 32nd Infantries, and the First Cavalry.

Company E of the 6th Infantry was composed principally of Monroe volunteers, as were Companies A and K of the 36th. Men from this district also served in the 8th, 17th, 18th, 33d and 37th (Graybeard) Infantry Regiments, and in the 7th Iowa Cavalry. Altogether 379 men were enlisted from Monroe County.

Twenty-five organizations were formed for active and



home service, on the following dates:

Monroe Guards, May 11, 1861, accepted for 6th Infantry.  
Monroe Light Horse, May 11, 1861, accepted for 1st Cavalry.  
Volunteer Militia of Urbana Township (no date given).  
Albia Rifles, organized August 24, 1861.  
Stacyville Union Guards, June 15, 1861.  
Urbana Grays, July 15, 1861.  
Melrose Guards, October 21, 1861.  
Albia State Guards, May 30, 1863.  
Monroe Grays, September 16, 1863.  
Melrose Grays, July 10, 1863.  
Franklin Sharpshooters, August 23, 1864.  
Military Company of Monroe Township, August 20, 1864.  
Lovilia Independent Company, August 1864.  
Urbana Union Company, September 3, 1864.  
The Albia Invincibles, September 16, 1864.  
Union Township Military Company, August 27, 1864.  
Rough and Ready Company, Rantua Township, August 18, 1864.  
Military Company, Cedar Township, August 13, 1864.  
Pleasant Corner Company, August 12, 1864.  
First Company, Troy Township, August 6, 1864.  
Osprey Rangers, Sept. 6, 1864.  
Wayne Township Company, August 6, 1864.  
Bluff Creek Rangers, August 18, 1864.  
Guilford Township Company, August 23, 1864.  
Pleasant Township Company, August 27, 1864.

There were many casualties among Monroe soldiers at the front, particularly among those who fought at Shiloh and Vicksburg, and relatives were notified that husbands, sons, and brothers had been killed in action, had died of wounds, or were taken prisoner. The 6th Infantry lost a tremendous number; seven officers and 100 men were killed in action; 469 men and 18 officers were wounded. The 36th Infantry lost 35 men in action, 25 from wounds, 235 from disease, and one by suicide; 142 were wounded.

Many who enlisted were very young, others, scarcely more than boys, had recently emigrated from Europe. Among the former was Charles H. Stevenson, who at the age of 16 had



received the first teacher's certificate granted in Monroe County. He had been appointed to teach school in Mantua Township at a salary of \$30 per month, but "this intended peaceful pursuit was interrupted; and he resigned his position to accept \$13 a month to assist in the preservation of the Union."

Stevenson enlisted August 1, 1862 in Company D, 22nd Iowa Volunteers -- a regiment which was the first to cross the Mississippi in Grant's Vicksburg campaign and later made a "gallant assault" on Fort Beauregard. Stevenson participated in the siege of Petersburg and Richmond and the Shenandoah Valley campaign of 1864. Captured at the battle of Winchester, Virginia, September 19, 1864, he spent seven months in southern prisons -- at the notorious Libby, and later at Salisbury and Andersonville. He was said to have saved the lives of several of his comrades by sharing his scanty rations with them.

One of the hard-fighting volunteers from Mantua Township was H. M. Chidester, who was born in Lewis County, West Virginia, October 23, 1837, and was one of 14 children in the Zadok Chidester family. In June, 1846, the Chidesters had traveled by boat down the Ohio and up the Mississippi rivers to Keokuk, then overland by oxtteam to Mantua Township, where the father secured 700 acres of land. The son, H. M., who enlisted in February 1863 in Company A, 36th Iowa Infantry, fought at Elkin's Ford and Camden, and was taken prisoner at Mark's Mills. During his ten months of captivity, he lived



on one pint of meal per day.

Another volunteer from Mantua Township was Asa A. Baird, owner of a 240-acre farm, who had driven from West Virginia in 1854, a journey of six weeks by horse and wagon. Serving in the 36th Iowa Infantry, he also was taken prisoner at Mark's Mills and was held for ten months in the Confederate prison at Tyler, Texas.

Levi Billings, whose parents settled in Monroe County when he was six, and who in later days could describe seeing two to five yoke of oxen driven to the breaking plow, enlisted in 1862 in Company B, 7th Iowa Cavalry. His regiment formed a part of the rough-rider command in the Western Army, covering 4,888 miles of the Plains, and participating in several engagements with the hostile Sioux, Cherokee and other warlike tribes.

The First Iowa Cavalry claimed Archibald Sinclair, who was born in Ireland in 1847, and became a resident of Monroe County in 1856. Enlisting at the age of 16, he served in the southwest under General Davison and General Rosecrans, and under General Custer in Texas.

Such are a few thumbnail war records, typical of the hundreds which might be mentioned to the credit of Monroe County.

James Drury, who fought with the 4th Vermont regiment, later lived near Albia. Drury, a native of County Claire, Ireland, moved to America in 1845, and enlisted in Vermont



in 1861. For his bravery at the battle of Weldon Railroad, June 23, 1864, Drury was granted a medal by a special Act of Congress. The ex-soldier moved to Iowa in 1869 with his young wife. "His entire capital was \$2.50, out of which amount he was obliged to pay 50 cents to have his trunk taken to his home, 8 miles north of Albia." A stonemason by trade, Drury was able to make a good living, and later acquired 200 acres of land.

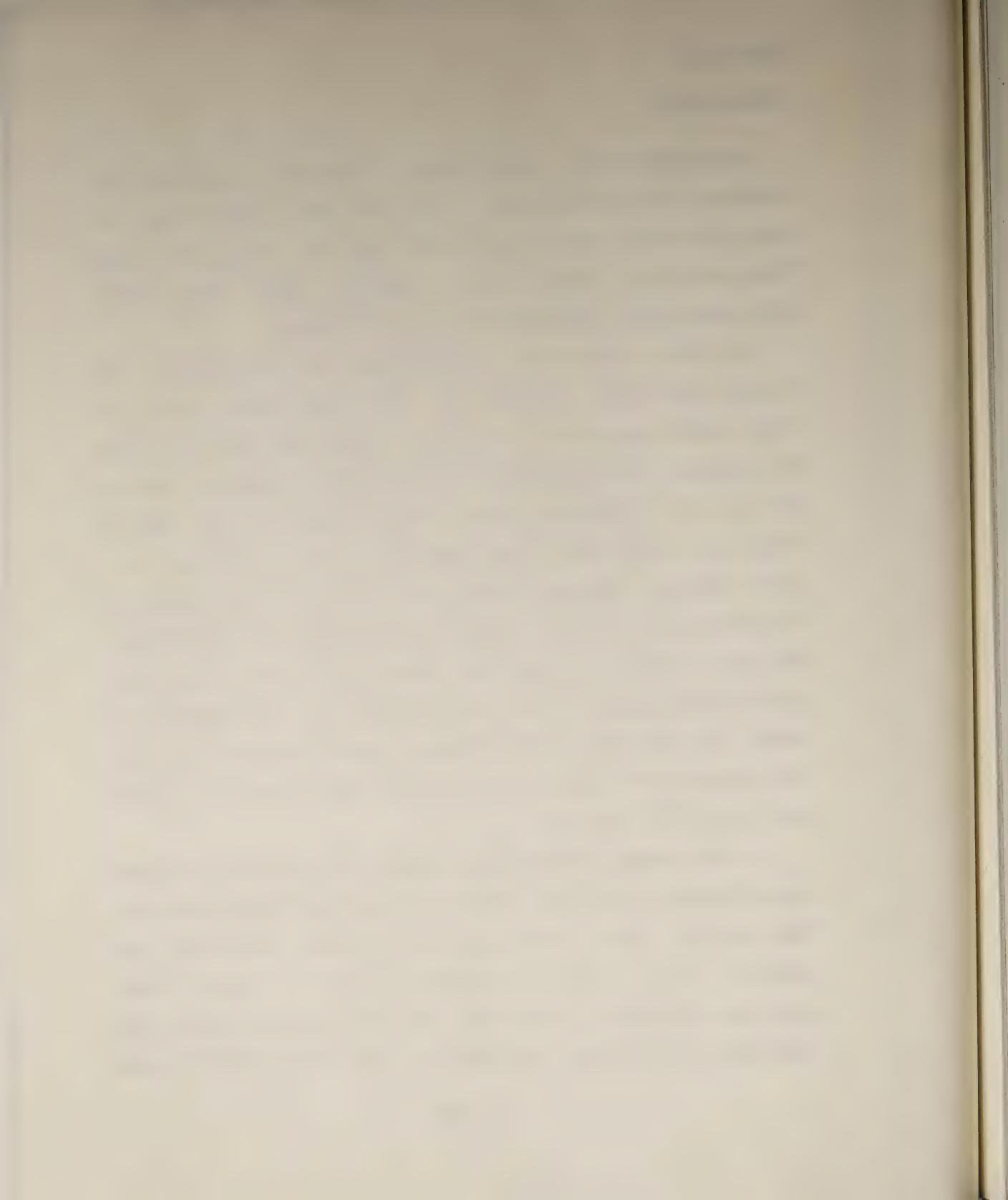


COAL MINING

For years after Monroe County had been organized, the residents continued to use wood for fuel, quite unaware of the rich bed of coal lying beneath the surface of their land. This potential wealth was not realized until after 1860, when veins were discovered along Avery Creek.

At first, only a few men worked in the mines during the winter, but as the demand for coal increased, slope, and later shaft mines were developed. When the coal lay near the surface, it was taken out by the strip mining method. The soil was removed, and the coal broken up with explosives and loaded by steam shovel. Labor costs were low. Slope mining, usually undertaken when the vein lay on a hillside, also did not require much expensive machinery. The coal, removed by pick and shovel, was brought by mule power up the slope to the mouth of the mine. In shaft mines, where the coal was 40 to 100 feet or more below the surface, the chunks were undercut by hand, or dynamited in pillars and hoisted to the top.

As the mining industry expanded, disagreements between the workers and the mine owners resulted in several strikes. The first of these took place in February 1880, when employees of the Albia Coal Company's mines at Cedar Creek, just west of Albia, walked out. Instead of negotiating with the men, Henry Miller, president of the firm, went to Mis-



souri and brought back a force of Negroes to replace the strikers. Shocked at this stratagem, the whites threatened the strikebreakers, and fired on them the night of February 21, 1880. The negroes shot back, but fortunately no one was hurt, and the appearance of a company of militia soon restored order. A precedent had been set, however, and the company again resorted to the practice of importing Negro workers at the expense of the whites.

Another strike occurred in 1890, when the eight-hour-day movement to replace the customary ten-hour-day was the incentive for a walk-out authorized by many labor organizations throughout the country.

Four years later another strike was declared which affected thousands of miners in Monroe County, as well as in adjacent vicinities. The "panic" of 1893 had paralyzed all lines of business. Money was not circulating freely, and coal operators said they were unable to pay the scheduled rates of former prosperous years. The result was the general strike called for April 21, 1894, by the National United Mine Workers of America.

Iowans did not heed the order, but after several appeals from the parent organization, the president of the local association called a convention at Albia May 3, 1894, to consider the cause for suspension. Two-thirds of the delegates opposed the strike. A motion to stop work was voted down by a one-vote majority. The subject was argued again next day; the proposed reduction in wages decreased former

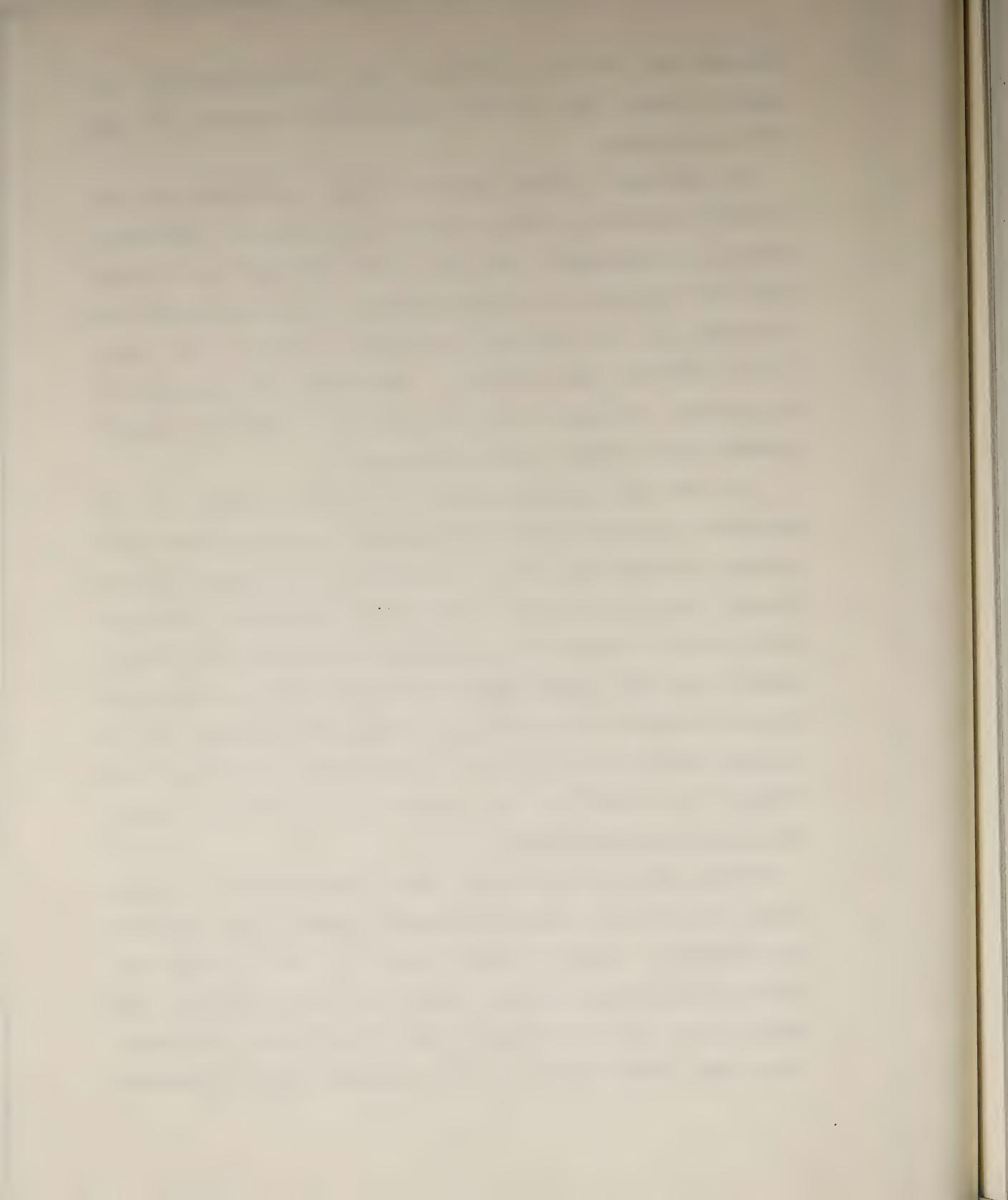


salaries by 20 cents per ton. Upon reconsideration, the miners voted May 4, by an eleven-vote majority, to stop work immediately.

It was June 9, 1894, before a joint conference was arranged between the miners and the operators at Oskaloosa, ending in an agreement that the "scale for wages for mining coal, and the rules and regulations in force during 1893, be restored, and that the same continue in effect till April 1895." Several less important resolutions were also enacted, and on Wednesday, June 13, 1894, all Iowa coal miners resumed work, having carried their point.

In 1896 the Consolidation Coal Company, owners of the extensive Muchakinock mines in Mahaska County, engaged Henry Newton, a mining engineer at Hamilton, to prospect for new fields. As a result, four years later the company purchased 8,600 acres of Monroe County land and 1,600 acres of Mahaska County land, at a total cost of \$275,000. The Northwestern Railroad extended its branch in June, 1900; houses and a company store were built; and B. C. Buxton, named the camp "Buxton" in honor of his father, J. E. Buxton, former Muchakinock superintendent.

During the next few years Buxton mushroomed to a population of 6,000, of which 5,500 were Negroes, many imported from Alabama. Money flowed freely. It was a rough-and-tumble place, scene of many brawls and some killings, but efforts were made to maintain order. Recreation was supervised and brass bands and a baseball team organized.



Churches and missions, a \$20,000 Y. M. C. A. and a 12-room schoolhouse were erected. A hack service from Albia provided regular transportation to the county seat.

In 1902 Buxton entertained Booker T. Washington, noted Negro, and honored him by a reception in which Albia officials and the Albia City Band participated. Afterward Washington lectured at the Buxton Opera House, and "the building was taxed to its fullest capacity, and hundreds were turned away from the door." Washington related how often he had been asked to help solve the race problem, and how he believed, "the way to solve your own problems is to control yourselves and your passions; do not be controlled by your lower nature; education is self-control; control yourself, and your family and your children."

During this period, Monroe was Iowa's leading coal-producing county, with an average of over 2,500,000 tons per year, a figure which has not been approached by any other county. Within a radius of 20 miles of Albia 19 mines were operating, employing from 3,500 to 4,000 workmen whose wages totalled nearly \$250,000 per month. Extensive coal deposits had been found at Hynes (Smoky Hollow), Avery, Bucknell, Consol, Haydock, and Hocking. Much of the output was consumed by the railroads passing through the region, while large shipments were made to the Dakotas and Nebraska.

Mining laws were amended as the result of a disaster at the Lost Creek mine near Albia, January 24, 1902. A windy or delayed shot caused an explosion which cost the lives of



20 men working in one pit, bent and twisted the rails of the tracks, and hurled debris 200 feet into the air. Rescue attempts were hampered by the wrecked machinery and bad air caused by the explosion. The Burlington Railroad furnished a special train to carry hundreds of friends from Albia and Hocking to the mass funeral at Eddyville, January 26, 1902. The report of the State mine inspector, John Verner, stated that the disaster was caused by a "windy shot" or "three-screamer," for which blame was to be attached to no one.

A repetition of the fatal affair was narrowly averted at the Star mine, two and a half miles northwest of Albia, January 27, 1902, when a "tight shot" almost ignited the coal dust, just as the men were quitting work. It failed to explode and no casualties resulted. During the following hours a slow smouldering ensued which by morning had broken into flames. The miners discovered it on coming to work, and battled until noon, hauling water in cans and dashing bucketfuls on the flames, finally extinguishing them.

Concerned by these accidents, Representative Nathan E. Kendall of Albia (Governor of Iowa, 1921-1925), introduced a mining bill in the 1902 spring session of the State Legislature. It provided for shot examiners, shot firers, and the sprinkling and dampening of all roadways and passageways to reduce the danger of explosions.

Kendall was also a supporter of the movement to establish a hospital where the many accident cases, as well as



sick patients could be cared for. Dr. Thomas Ernest Gutch, who inherited his father's medical practice in Albion at the turn of the century, in association with Dr. Marney of Hiteman, founded the Miner's Hospital at the G. W. Hartsuck home in West Albion in October 1913. Starting with three nurses and 12 beds, the hospital was intended for miners who were not able to pay for hospitalization elsewhere. By paying a small monthly charge, the miner and his family could obtain the necessary attention. Soon 2,000 miners were subscribers to the hospital, which was moved to larger quarters. By working with many sufferers from mine accidents, Dr. Gutch gained experience which won him recognition as a leading specialist in the setting of back fractures. He was named medical head for the 13th District of the United Mine Workers of America, which established permanent headquarters at Albion in 1911.

One of the last mines to be opened in Monroe County was that established in 1917 by the Maple Coal Company, headed by Hugh Shuler, president. More familiarly known as Maple, the place was named Wanlock by Shuler, after the Scottish town in which his mother had been born. The mine was sunk especially to furnish coal for the Northwestern Railroad, and was equipped to produce only locomotive coal. It contained none of the crushers and screens required for commercial sizes. The output was 1,000 tons a day.

Wanlock prospered for seven years and the population reached 500, including many Negroes, and some English and



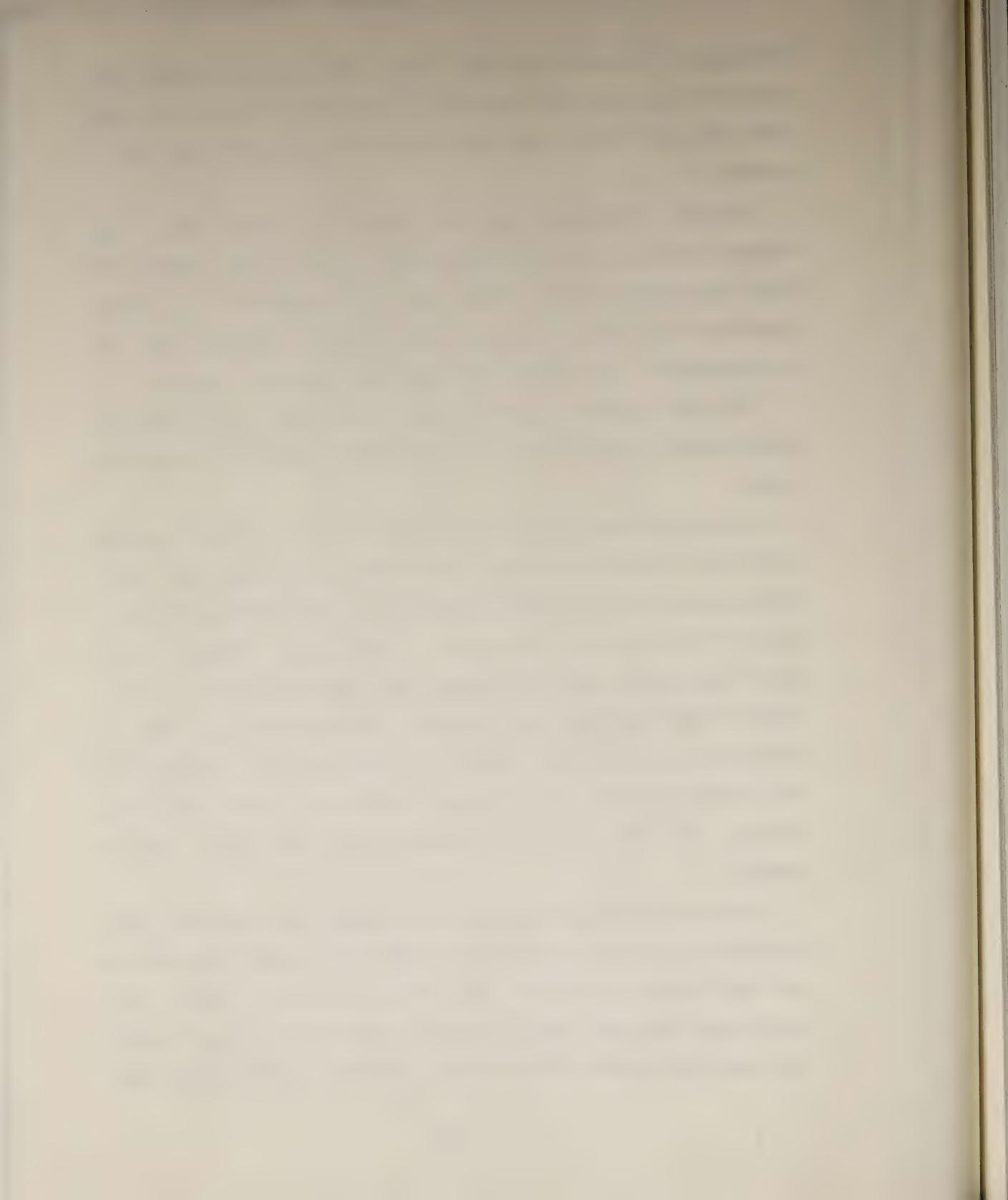
Italians. In 1924 a dispute between the mine officials and those of the railroad caused the latter to cease buying coal. The mine, far from worked out, was shut down for want of a market.

Almost overnight, Wahlock became a ghost town. The tipple, cars and cage were abandoned just as they were; also the 103 houses, store, school, and two windmills. A fence enclosed the area, which was visited daily for ten years by a caretaker. The houses were sold for wrecking in 1935.

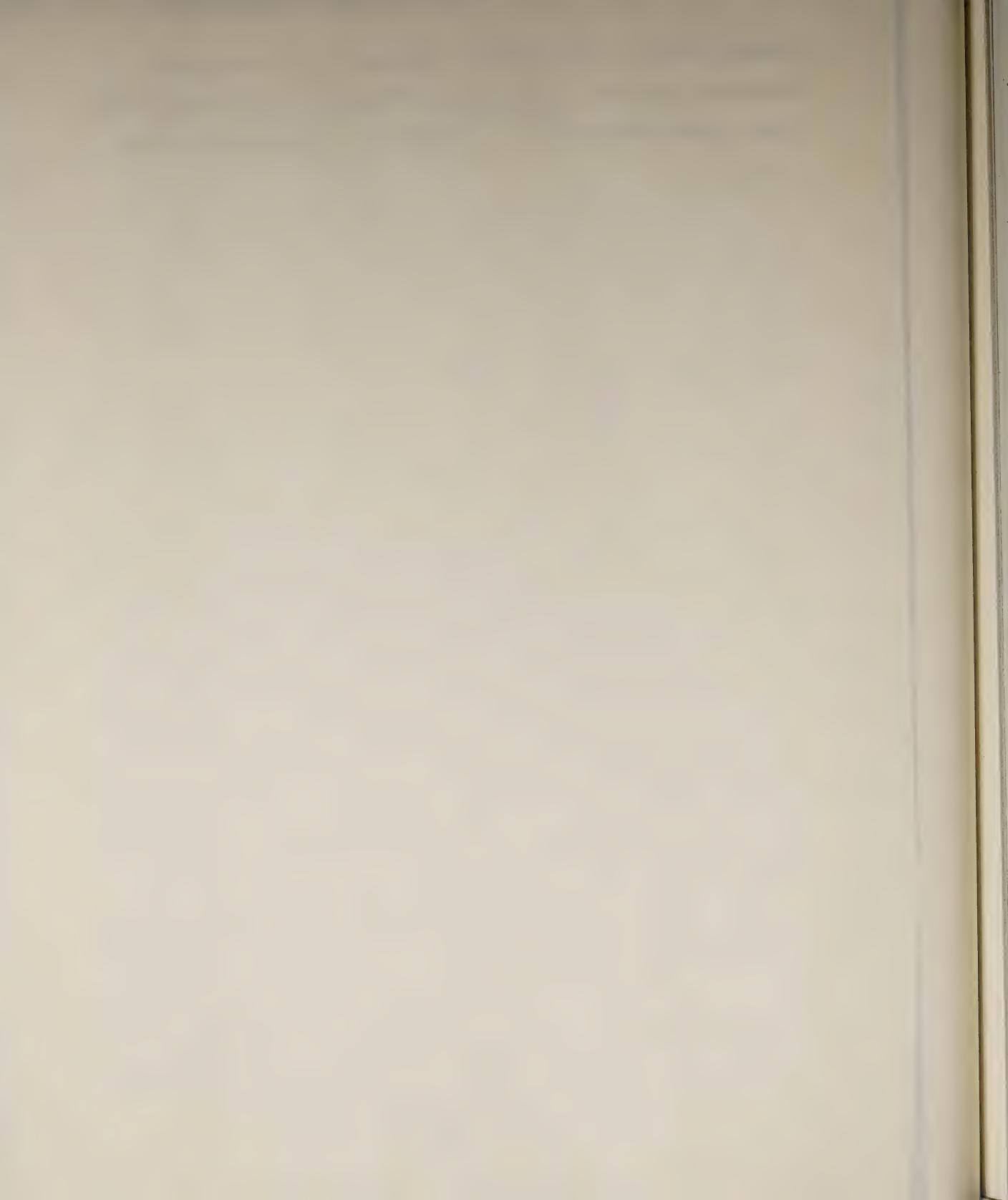
In 1924, Monroe County's coal production was 1,085,833 tons valued at \$3,549,000 out of an Iowa total of 5,468,450 tons.

Then the local industry began to decline; fields "played out" and during labor disputes eastern firms took over marketing contracts for Monroe companies which permanently disposed of the latter's interests. Camps were abandoned almost overnight. Houses, stores, and schools fell to ruin, while weeds over-ran the streets. Between 1920 and 1930, in particular, a wholesale decline in the county's population was caused by the migration of miners to more promising fields. In 1937, less than 200,000 tons were mined in the county.

The once-teeming boom-camp of Buxton had returned into wasteland like the rest, but in 1930 its memory was recalled by the "Buxton Reunion." All former workers there, both whites and Negroes, were invited to return for a day. Markers were put up where the stores, churches, and schools pre-



viously stood. A program of speeches and amusements was arranged, and the reunion was scheduled to be held every year on the first Sunday in September, weather permitting.

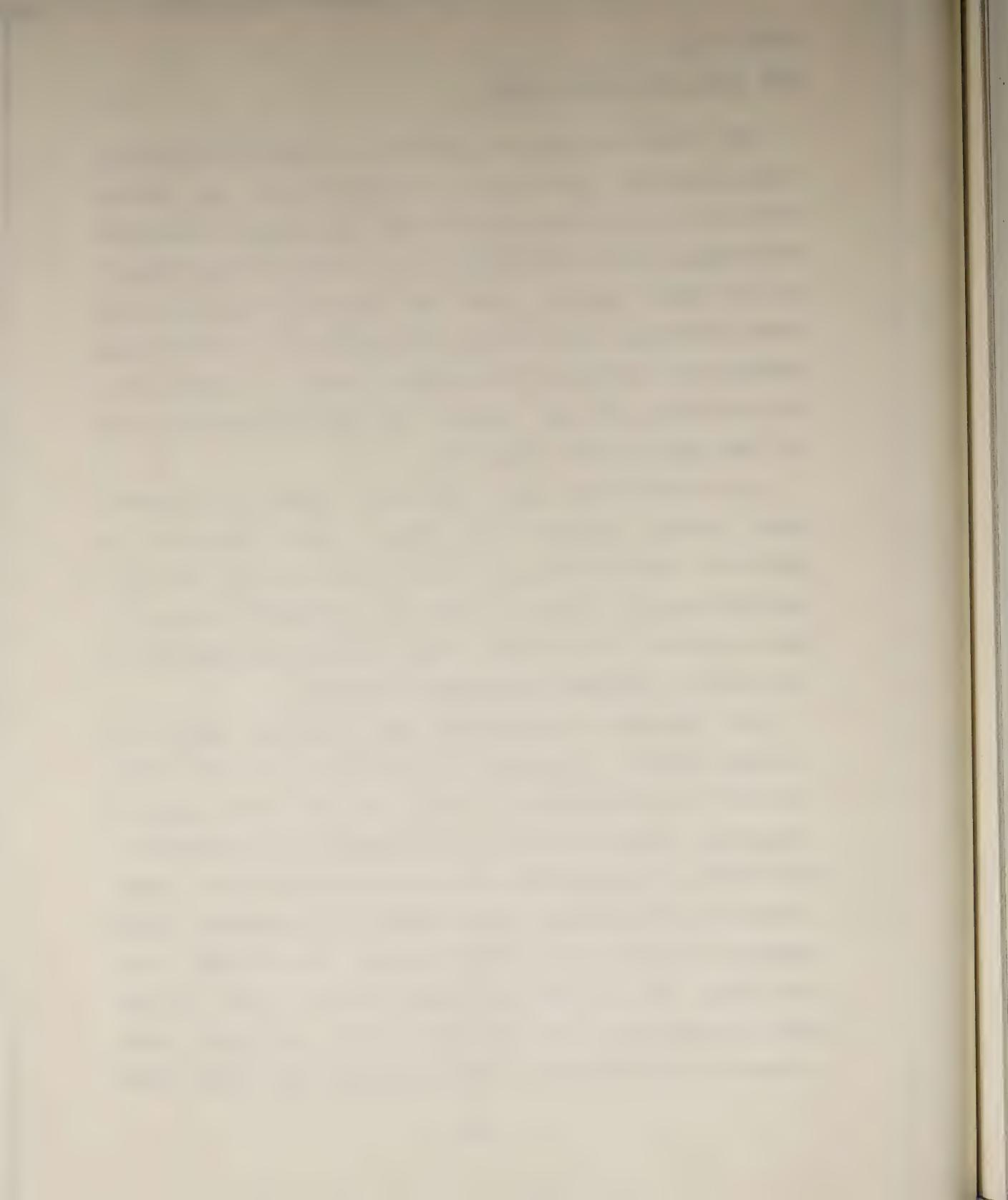


THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

The twentieth century ushered in a period of growth, organization and prosperity to Monroe County. The mining industry was at its height and other businesses flourished accordingly. Albia was proud of its "Manufacturers' Block" on the public square where the Stitch Carriage Painting Works of Chicago was located, with blacksmith, harness, buggy, hardware and furniture establishments nearby. A slogan was coined: "Listen for the whistle and watch for the big sign on 'The Manufacturers' Block.'"

In November 1901, voters decided to build a new courthouse costing \$75,000 -- an amount later increased to \$100,000. The cornerstone was laid on the site of the original building on August 29, 1902. The finished edifice of gray sandstone, in the mixed style used by governments in this period, was dedicated October 26, 1903.

War veterans' organizations kept alive the spirit of military service. Volunteers from Monroe County had served with the 51st Iowa Infantry during the war with Spain -- among them Fred D. Everett, George Duncan, Charles Crowell, Ed. Alford, Nathan Russell, Orville Welt, Ralph Mason, Henry Longnaker, Joe Reynolds, Elmer Marver, Hugh Denhery, Harry Bumston, Charles Norman, and Ollie Mock. The regiment left Des Moines June 5, 1898, and after service in the Philippines reached home again November 6, 1899. Mock died while in camp at San Francisco. The Sons of Veterans of the Civil



War met and organized Camp Daniel Anderson December 30, 1901, named for the colonel of the First Iowa Infantry. The Iowa National Guard Armory was dedicated June 27, 1903, when 300 persons attended the opening military ball.

The new Burlington Railroad station at Albia was opened in January 1902, after the route had spent \$20,000 for substantial local improvements. The townspeople showed their appreciation by paving the street from the town square to the station. The Iowa Central and Wabash railroads erected a new \$12,000 depot at Albia, which opened for service in the spring of 1904. In the same year the Monroe County Good Roads Club was organized under the direction of D. S. Lyon, State Secretary of the Good Roads Movement.

The Albia Library Association was established in December 1901 at the home of Mrs. G. C. McCormick. Books circulated at the rate of 10 cents a week per book. On July 28, 1905, the association transferred its good will and current funds to the Albia Public Library. Ground on which to build the \$10,000 library donated by Andrew Carnegie was supplied in May 1906 by J. Z. Evans, owner of the Smoky Hollow coal mine, who bought a \$3,000 lot and presented it to the town.

During this period, several leading district conventions were held at the Monroe County seat, most of them at the new King Opera House. That structure, built by Dr. S. M. King, was of "fine gray brick, with a main entrance floor of Moasic marble, six exits and stage dimensions 30 x 56 feet",



large enough to accommodate "horses, cattle, and threshing-machines should the acts demand it."

Monroe County residents participated in the annual Iowa Eisteddfod, an ancient institution that had its rise in Wales in the twelfth century to perpetuate Welsh music. From the beginning the celebration included contests in poetry, singing, and harping, but by the nineteenth century, the emphasis was on singing. Wherever Welshmen live in sufficient numbers, the eisteddfod is observed. In Monroe County, the especial "strongholds" were in Albia and Hiteman. Ambitious choir leaders would spend weeks in training and developing contestants for the competitive choruses in the hope of winning a part of the several hundred dollars subscribed for prizes. The celebration of the eisteddfod, a one-day festival, was held each Thanksgiving Day. The last one in Albia was held in the old King Theatre, about 1920.

Warm weather brought carnival week, sponsored by the merchants, when Albia was "strictly in it, with shows and games galore." The entertainment lasted seven days and was "a respectable institution with no toughs, or if they are, they are kept in the background." Advertised attractions included a "colored people's" plantation song and dance, a moving picture show, a glass-blowers' tent, two fortunetellers, a regular circus, two "baby-racks", a chance to get 50 cents "if you can hit a monkey", a Ferris wheel, refreshment stands, a trick bicycle rider, a lariat thrower, "and lots of other things, all in the streets and ready for patronage."



The Chautauqua reached Albia in the summer of 1905, when the "big tent" was stretched in the City Park, a site donated by the city council. The speaker on the opening day was William Jennings Bryan, "Silver-tongued orator of the Platte." Richmond Pearson Hobson, hero of the Merrimac, was another lecturer, while, according to the Albia Republican, "the big drawing-card on the closing day was the address of Governor La Follette of Wisconsin, who rendered a most able discourse on his favorite topic 'politics', to a large and attentive audience."

Unfortunately, such undisputed attractions failed to insure the financial success of the Chautauqua, which closed with a deficit of about \$700. Modest admission prices had been charged -- 25 cents singles, \$1.50 season tickets. Free instruction in vocal music was offered as an extra inducement to all buyers of season tickets. The Chautauqua was continued, however, and subsequently had very successful seasons.

After several years of consideration and negotiation, the people of Albia voted to maintain a water-works system, and to authorize the city council to issue bonds for the purpose. A lake or reservoir was established one and one-half miles northwest of Albia, with a drainage area of 645 acres, mostly bluegrass pasture. The dam, with a height of 25 feet, extended 500 feet across a valley. The storage tower was built 125 feet high, with a tank of 10,000 gallons capacity.



Since 1876, when the first class of three members had been graduated, the Albia high school system had systematically developed, adding music, art, and athletics to the basic program. A \$75,000 high school with gymnasium, stage, and laboratories was built in 1912. Enrollment was increased by the influx of miners' families. Good rural and standard schools in the various townships of Monroe County had a total enrollment of more than 15,000 students in 1940.

#### A Cyclone and Some Fires

A cyclone struck the western portion of Monroe County in the wake of a storm on the evening of May 1, 1902. An ugly bank of clouds had loomed up in the southwest, and soon a downpour of rain and hail fell, accompanied by lightning and terrific peals of thunder. Half an hour later the rain stopped, but another ominous bank of black clouds arose and quickly formed into a funnel, which swept across Jackson Township demolishing homes and barns. Several houses at Stacyville and Hiteman were wrecked, and herds of stock were scattered. One horse, picked up at the Jim Lutterell farm, was carried a quarter of a mile, 440 yards, and dashed to earth, a fence rail driven completely through its body. Farm implements, telephone lines and all kinds of property were destroyed by the cyclone and ensuing fires but few injuries were sustained, for most people took refuge in their storm cellars. Many families, however, were left destitute of food and clothing, and were aided by relief donations taken up in town and rural districts.



The business section of Albia was repeatedly ravaged during the early 1900's by fires which were fought with difficulty, owing to the lack of a municipal waterworks. The home of the Albia Union was destroyed early on the morning of March 8, 1900, and less than a year later, March 3, 1901, the new offices of the paper succumbed to flames which destroyed printing presses, several hundred volumes of a Monroe County history, a library, and bound volumes of all Albia newspapers. The Union was able to continue publication from borrowed quarters, with the aid of type and presses loaned by the Albia News.

Albia fire-fighters answered a call at the Hartsuck-Lewis block at 1 a. m. March 2, 1903, but when the engine broke down, the blaze raged on, causing \$25,000 damage.

At 3 a. m., November 13, 1903, a visiting member of the Southwest Iowa Editorial Association, getting up to procure more bedcovering, noticed a red glare outside his window. He at once gave the alarm, and the Albia Fire Company, handicapped by a burst hose, attempted to save the Love Building and Dry Goods store. The Chariton Fire Department, responding to a frantic summons, hurried over to help check the flames, but by then the larger part of the business block had been completely razed. Twenty-eight mercantile firms lost their buildings and stock amounting to \$250,000, about half of which was covered by insurance. Afterward, one of the convention editors remarked waspishly in his column that his group considered Albia had given them "an unusually warm reception."



One of the worst of the fires was that discovered on the night of April 2, 1904, by Merchant Police Officer Trimble. Trimble was making his rounds when, passing the Perry block, he heard a sound of crackling glass. A window front, heated by mounting flames, had crashed to the pavement. Trimble sounded the alarm but the fire spread quickly because one fire engine was at the factory and the other in need of repairs. Before they could take refuge, two men, Edward Dougherty and Richard H. Ingham, were buried in the debris of a falling brick wall. Ingham was identified only by the church keys in his pockets. Three other men were critically injured. The Chariton Fire Department, hastily summoned, was delayed by blocking freight trains and did not reach town until 3 a. m. By then local "bucket brigades" had materially checked the flames, but the west half of the south side of the Albia square was razed with a property loss of \$100,000, of which \$75,000 was covered by insurance.

Ten days immediately following the fire of April 2, 1904, a Dean Steam Pump was brought to Albia and set up on a concrete base in the city fire house. It was not portable, but could throw two streams of water with great force.

Nevertheless, another serious fire occurred later in the year, at 1 a. m. on December 13, 1904, when 11 firms in the Hennion block suffered a combined loss of \$35,000.

A climax to this list of conflagrations was the destruction on November 5, 1905 of the Western Machine Company, manufacturers of the "Chieftain" line of farm machinery, in-



cluding hay loaders and rakes. The company loss amounted to \$30,000, with another \$10,000 loss sustained by Howard Flanagan, owner of the building. The whole county suffered when the recently established company, which had been manufacturing 3,500 machines annually, moved to Ottumwa, instead of relocating in Albia.

Albians were again awakened by the fire siren at 2 a. m. January 5, 1908, when a fire originating in the storeroom of the Hocking Supply Company consumed the building in a mass of flames. One hundred men at Hocking immediately volunteered to start moving boxcars, one containing dynamite, out of reach of the fire. Warned of their danger, they scattered like quail and had barely reached safety when the car exploded. Forty boxes, each containing 25 sticks of dynamite, had blown up, driving the trucks of the cars four feet into the ground. Iron rails were bent and twisted, pieces of car wheels were thrown hundreds of feet, and 15 railroad cars were demolished or burned. Fifty houses at Hocking were damaged and members of more than 30 families were injured, although no one was killed. Losses were estimated at a total of \$75,000. The shock of the explosion was heard 30 miles away. At Albia, stated the Republican, "the ringing of the fire bell and the blowing of the whistle denoted that something had happened, and then the lurid sky in the direction of Hocking told the complete story. Buggies went to Hocking that night by the hundreds."

The Albia Fire Department was summoned to fight a seri-



ous blaze at Melrose five nights later, at 4 a. m. January 10, 1908. In those days, when motor transportation was not yet general, it was necessary to ship the fire engine by train. By the time an available freight car could be located, Melrose telegraphed that the flames were under control. The offices and buildings of 12 small firms had been destroyed at an aggregate loss of \$20,000. The fire started in the plant of the Melrose "Big Four" Record, where printing equipment, subscription-books and other records were all consumed. A philosophic loser was C. R. Thompson, Melrose produce dealer, whose carload of potatoes, valued at several hundred dollars, was burned in the basement of one of the buildings. Thompson salvaged a supply of the roasted spuds and "served a potato-doughnut lunch to the fire fighters down the line of action."



## CHAPTER 12

### MONROE COUNTY 1917-1940

During the years of the World War and those immediately following Monroe County was still developing commercially and enjoying industrial prosperity. A considerable percentage of the State's coal was mined there, and new shafts were frequently sunk. Residents of the communities, banded together for Red Cross and patriotic activities. And, appropriately enough, on May 30, 1917, the granite square and statue of the Soldiers' Monument, a Civil War memorial at Albion, was unveiled in the courtyard. A soldier, 8 feet 6 inches tall, tops the 27-foot 5-inch monument. The inscription at the base reads: "Erected to the memory of Our Fallen Heroes of 1861-1865."

Monroe County furnished 363 soldiers, 24 sailors and 7 nurses during the World War. Twenty-one died of disease or wounds, or were killed in action. John Jessie Smith, who had enlisted in the marine corps in Chicago June 6, 1917, was killed September 14, 1918, while carrying a dispatch in the St. Mihiel drive. He was the first Albion man to die overseas.

Otis Turner, a private in Company K, 117th Infantry, was later cited for extraordinary heroism in action near Busigny, France, October 18, 1918. When his platoon was held up by an enemy machine gun post, Private Turner and a companion rushed an automatic rifle 50 yards through intense fire, set it in position, and put it effectively into action. On Nov-



ember 22, 1918, the Prince of Wales decorated Turner with Great Britain's Military Medal in recognition of the exploit. Lieutenant Don Kreger, also of Albia, was awarded the French Croix de Guerre for his unceasing labor and sleepless nights during the fighting at Blanc Mont from October 5 to 15, 1918.

The first American Legion post in Monroe County was organized August 16, 1919 at Albia. It was named the Howard Cessna Post, in honor of young Cessna, of Albia, who had enlisted April 27, 1917 with the engineer corps and died of pneumonia at Camp Cody, Deming, New Mexico, December 20, 1917.

Two leading figures in Iowa public life, both long identified with Monroe County -- the Hon. Lafayette Young (1843-1926) and the Hon. Pathan E. Kendall (1863-1936) reached the peaks of their careers in the years just preceding and following the World War.

Lafayette Young, statesman and newspaper publisher, was born on a farm not far from Eddyville on May 10, 1843, the son of John Young, one of the first Monroe County settlers to come west from Indiana. Until he was 13, the boy attended winter sessions at school, plunging through the snow-drifts along Gray's Creek to reach the classroom. During the Civil War he had to support himself and his mother by working in the woolen mills of Agency City and Eddyville, where he earned \$6 per week. He tried to enlist in the Union Army in 1863, but was rejected on account of his youth, and took a job as "printer's devil" in Albia. This introduction to printer's ink resulted in Young's eventually



learning to be both compositor and editor.

After living in Des Moines and Atlantic, he represented Cass County in the State legislature, then established permanently in Des Moines as publisher of the Capital, a daily with a circulation of 1800, which he bought in 1890.

"Lafe" Young, as he was affectionately known covered two wars as correspondent for his paper. In 1898, while following Major General Shafter's campaign in Cuba, he became acquainted with Col. Theodore Roosevelt. As a result, during the Republican National Convention at Philadelphia in 1900, "Lafe" Young nominated "the Rough Rider" for Vice President. He went to Washington in 1910 when appointed Jonathan P. Dolliver's successor to the United States Senate.

Traveling abroad to study agricultural problems, Young was in Europe at the outbreak of the World War, and sent lively dispatches back to the Capital. His activities culminated in his arrest by the Austrians as a "spy," for the name "Lafayette" had aroused their suspicion that he was in reality a French espionage agent! After the United States entered the war, Young became chairman for the State Council of Defense for Iowa. The Knight Order of Leopold II of Belgium was conferred upon him for raising large funds in Iowa for the relief of Belgian children.

Nathan E. Kendall, born March 17, 1868, on a farm near Greenville, Lucas County, moved to Albia as a young man and, having learned shorthand, entered into an association with T. B. Perry, veteran lawyer and former Monroe County prose-



cuting attorney. Kendall did Perry's shorthand work for him in exchange for the use of the lawyer's office and equipment.

Kendall, a Republican, was admitted to the bar in May 1889 and soon after this early start he served as city attorney, county attorney, and member of the State legislature. He had become known as a polished speaker and was always in demand at various gatherings.

Elected to Congress in 1909, Kendall served until 1913, withdrawing from renomination at that time on account of ill health. He was able, however, to accept the governorship of Iowa several years later, and acted as chief executive of the State from 1921 to 1925.

Governor and Mrs. Kendall won the deep gratitude of the people of Albia by presenting their home to the city for the use of the Woman's Club, and as a community center. In 1930 Kendall donated a \$10,000 addition to the Albia Public Library; after his death in 1936 another gift of 6,500 books enlarged the 10,000 volume collection.

As a memorial to the Governor, a canary marble seat and a flagstone walk were placed on the lawn of his former Albia home, now known as "Kendall Place." In accordance with his request, his ashes now rest in an urn under the flagstone walk, about three feet in front of the marble seat.

The Monroe County Farm Bureau was first formed in 1918 when 200 members were secured to insure affiliation with the national federation. Within four years the membership had



grown to 700 and County Agent Gardner and T. G. Albaugh began to organize a Farm Management and Record Club to teach boys the business side of farming.

Since 1923 the Albia Fall Festival has been an annual celebration, sponsored by the Commercial Club; it includes three special events -- Farmer's Day, Miner's Day, and School Day.

A new dam for the City of Albia, believed to be the largest earthen dam in the State, was constructed three-eights of a mile below the old dam, in 1924. It is 714 feet long, 214 feet wide, 47 feet high.

The Albia Garden Club held its first show May 16, 1926 at the home of Dr. S. T. Gray, who was said to have had the finest tulip beds in Iowa that season.

A Revolutionary War Veteran, William Crockett (1747-1849), a cousin of Davy Crockett, was honored in August 1926 when the Betty Zane Chapter of the D. A. R. had his remains moved from the John W. Collins farm south of Albia to the Oak View Cemetery. Judge D. M. Anderson had a native red granite boulder weighing 2,600 pounds hauled to the spot; a plaque was affixed and dedication exercises held.

In September of 1927, a junior college was established in the \$75,000 Albia High School building. Miss Myrta Harlow was the first dean, and W. H. Fasold the superintendent. During the same season a new athletic field equipped with both grandstand and bleachers was opened.

The Monroe County Fair, following a tumultuous existence



of fat years, lean years, and no years at all, was sold by the Sheriff of that county on December 17, 1926. The "Fair" as sold, included what was left of the buildings, stands, fences, amphitheater, and race track; the buyer was W. B. Griffith, representing himself and other owners of the ground, who took this means to satisfy in part their claims for back rent. The buyers had no intention, however of wrecking the equipment, but rather of enlarging and improving it for future expositions. With this object in mind, the "Fair" was reorganized and memberships in the rejuvenated association sold at \$20 each, and new directors and other officials were chosen. The first exposition under the new set-up was held during the week beginning August 22, 1927, after which the Fair was presented as a permanent annual event of late summer.

During the next decade the Fair Grounds were chosen as the scene of the five-day Annual meet of the Iowa State Fox Hunting Association, where enthusiastic devotees of both fox and coon hunts could pitch their tents free of charge and enter into the business of the week. Residents of the vicinity usually found most enjoyment in participating in the bench show held at the courthouse yard. Local youngsters, especially, looked forward to this event and the subsequent parade when "dogs of all kinds" shown by their youthful masters and mistresses were marched down Main Street to the tune of a brass band.

The coon hunt was also very popular. Various trailing



contests were conducted by actual 'coon-hunting tests at the Fair Grounds, with prizes given and ratings marked among the dogs.

After 1934 many improvements in schools and other public buildings and grounds, and grading, widening, paving or re-surfacing of streets were made throughout the county by means of PWA and WPA projects. The Albia schools thus acquired an excellent new fieldhouse and auditorium. The drive for a good road system initiated in Monroe County in 1934 resulted in the gradual addition of 91.1 miles of permanent grade and 62 miles of rock-surfaced highway, for which 75,000 cubic yards of rock were taken from recently opened quarries at Lovilia, Melrose, and Eddyville. Nearly 190 miles of shale roads in the county were constructed between 1934 and 1939.

In 1935 a CCC Camp was established in Albia and a WPA pasturage project was set up in the Monroe area. Supervised workers grubbed out brush and timber on a 280-acre tract and built 50 check-dams and other improvements so that the land might be used by the Government as a demonstration of pasture methods.

The demand for horses and mules in the Albia Sales Pavilion Ring began to challenge the supremacy of the "Horseless Age," for animals were auctioned daily, both to local purchasers, and to buyers for eastern markets. Early in 1936 a team of horses brought \$370, while top price for one was \$177.50.



An experimental farm of about 495 acres, three miles southwest of Albia, was managed by the Farm Security Administration (formerly Resettlement Administration) to show how depleted land could be improved by the proper application of lime and fertilizer and by modern farming methods. In November 1937, 367 acres of land were acquired, the remainder the following January. WPA laborers erected five neat gray-painted buildings; a small house modern in every detail, administration offices, a laboratory, a corncrib, chicken house and a garage. In the spring of 1938, the ground was limed, 160,000 to 180,000 trees planted, hedge-rows which sapped the ground of minerals needed by crops were uprooted, and acre plots were laid out, some treated with lime and some not so treated. Within due time, a good stand of oats appeared on the treated plots, while those which had not been limed or fertilized grew either nothing, or only a very thin stand of oats. The land treated by the WPA workers was leased to farmers. In 1938, 50 acres of oats yielded 3,600 bushels, or more than 60 bushels per acre on soil which had previously been almost entirely depleted.

In the early spring of 1939, it was announced that Monroe was the first among more than 40 counties in Iowa to be mapped off by airplane for Government AAA benefit checks. Distribution of the checks among the farmers began December 31, 1939, and a total of \$69,595.07 had been received at various points by January 2, 1940.

A community hall built at Melrose in 1939 was the direct



result of the excellent showing made the previous year by the high school basketball team of that town. In March 1937, the Melrose "Shamrocks" had won the honor of being the first Monroe County basketball team to qualify for play in the Boys' State High School Basketball Tournament held at Drake University, Des Moines. The team made history when it captured the State championship title and trophy and also set a record for victory, playing 33 games that season and winning them all. Monroe County turned out almost en masse to welcome the home team, which was banqueted at the Albia Commercial Club March 30, 1937. The Albia High School and Junior College football and basketball squads, and teams from Lovilia and Hiteman, were also guests. Later, Capt. Walter O'Conner presented the State championship trophy to the team and the Melrose High School, and each player received a special award.

When the community hall was built at Melrose in 1939, under PWA auspices, a large part was devoted to a gymnasium and auditorium where the "Shamrocks" could practice and schedule games. The building is 80 feet long and 60 feet wide, and is constructed of red brick. The auditorium seats 1,000 persons. The Monroe County News issued a special Melrose Homecoming Edition on September 18, 1939, to be distributed at the time when the new hall was dedicated. On the second evening of the two-day celebration, the basketball stars who had won the Iowa title in 1937 re-assembled to play a dedication game against the athletes of Drake University.



Dr. and Mrs. Ross had established the first Methodist Episcopal Church in Iowa at their cabin in Burlington April 27, 1834. They devoted years to building up the congregation and organization before moving on to Lovilia, where the Rev. Dr. Ross preached until his death. In May 1937, Methodist ministers from Burlington and Albia made a pilgrimage to Lovilia to hold special dedicatory services at the graves.

In 1935 the Lovilia Methodist Congregation placed a granite boulder monument over the hitherto unmarked graves of the Rev. William R. Ross (1804-1885) and his wife, Matilda Morgan Ross (1816-1888).

Lovilia's business was stimulated in the late 1930's by the demand for coal, and the consequent mining and shipping activities. During the 1938 season, 1,300 cars, loaded with approximately 65,000 tons of coal, were dispatched from the Lovilia railroad station. A coal-processing company was organized in 1939, capable of grading 1,000 to 1,400 tons daily. During the 24 working days of January 1940, 243 railroad cars of coal were sent out over the Burlington and Wabash lines, averaging a trainload a day, while almost as much was hauled by truck. Six coal companies were using Lovilia as a shipping point at that time. The payroll for the period from January 16 to February 10, 1940 amounted to \$20,300.

Citizens of Lovilia faced a quandary during the March 1939, election when three candidates for the same post on the city council, Fred Barnes, Floyd Davis, and R. E. Studer



each received 132 votes. A fourth, Robert Zimmerman, polled 131. The three "tied" candidates solved the problem by agreeing to a drawing among themselves to determine which two should withdraw from candidacy. Fred Barnes drew the lucky number, and was declared legally elected to the Lovilia City Council.

The Smoky Hollow Company took over the Hiteman mines in 1916. A new school was built in the town, but was not adequate for the 600 pupils. The Baptist Church was rented for the overflow, and nicknamed "Corn Cob College." In 1917 the miners erected a library and maintained it by monthly donations. Leonard D. Evans, son of John Z. Evans, managed the mines until 1939 when they were closed, due to underselling by large concerns. The coal itself was still abundant.

A plot to hold up the Smoky Hollow Company's Hiteman mine payroll was frustrated on the outskirts of Albia on April 10, 1935. Four Chicago gangsters were waiting to force the messenger car to the curb and succeeded in doing so, but were immediately riddled with bullets from a group of police officers whose suspicions had in some way been aroused. The robbers were captured and sentenced to 25-year terms at Ana-mosa, while the Monroe County sheriff and the Albia police department were lauded for their alertness and timely action. Later, metal was melted from the bandit guns and used to form plaques of honor which were presented to the leaders of the capturing party.

The cessation of mining in Hiteman in 1939 closed, temporarily at least, a history of five decades. The first



mine was sunk in April 1890 by the Wapello Coal Company. Others were opened until there were 12, and the industry was developed until 900 persons were employed. At times 1,500 to 3,000 persons were said to have lived in the vicinity, which "needed no law" and was not incorporated. If some offense was committed, the culprit received a 30-day suspended sentence from work -- and that was enough. Many subdivisions made up the town (each named after some person, incident or attribute) "Swede Town" - "Dude Hill" - "Store Hill" and "Baptist Row." Streetcar service was maintained between Hiteman and Albia, cars running every 40 minutes.

In 1940, the affairs of 14,000 miners were being administered from the headquarters of District 13 of the United Mine Workers of America. The office had been moved to Albia from Oskaloosa in 1911 when W. H. Rodgers, who was district president, continued in office. Other district presidents serving at Albia were J. C. Lewis, 1917-1921; Joe Morris, 1921-1929; J. D. Smith, 1929-1931; Frank Wilson, 1931-1939; and Louis Boldrini, 1939-. The entire State of Iowa, with about 10,000 miners, was included under the jurisdiction of this area, with a provisional district comprising the northern half of Missouri added in 1937.

A new community project took form in Albia in 1939 when the Ministerial Association, Lions' Club, Rotary Club, Commercial Club, Women's Club, Business and Professional Women's Club, and American Legion cooperated to initiate a series of free public forums. Outstanding speakers were en-



gaged to appear on the various programs of the six weeks series.

Early in 1940 new automatic control signals were installed in Albion, at the intersection of Benton Avenue and Main Street, and at Clinton and A Streets.

Nearly a century has passed since the creation of Monroe County. From a quiet wilderness, through turbulent years of coal mining, it has steadily advanced until now it faces the future as an energetic community where agricultural, industrial, and social cooperation find full expression to the common benefit.

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